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ABSTRACT

Recognizing that child care located in the schools has many benefits, this manual was prepared for those planning or implementing school-age child care partnerships for kindergarten and primary grade children. Reporting on programs in the Ontario (Canada) area, the manual notes five issues that are central to developing such a program: (1) cooperation versus integration of care centers; (2) continuity and consistency versus diversity in programming; (3) supervision versus independence of the child; (4) targeting versus universality of eligibility; and (5) flexibility versus stability of service delivery. Section 1 explores how changes in demography are affecting children's out-of-school lives. Section 2 reviews the implications of child care quality on children's learning and development. Section 3 describes the legislative and funding framework that shapes the management of school-child care partnerships. Section 4 discusses how school boards can make policy and program initiatives so as to play a leadership role in responding to changing families and communities. Section 5 analyzes operational issues that school boards and child care managers should consider when implementing a school-based child care strategy. Section 6 summarizes the history of the partnership among schools, child care services, and recreation programs, which predates the 20th century. Section 7 uses a holistic approach to present specific strategies for organizing people, space, and materials. Section 8 presents specific strategies needed to foster effective partnerships in neighborhood schools. Work sheets, sample programs, and lists of resources are included. Contains a 137-item bibliography that includes historical sources, and archival and other primary sources. (TM)

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Caring for Play

The School and Child Care Connection

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PUBLICATION

Caring for Play

The School and Child Care Connection

By Noel Young

A Guide for Elementary School Principals, Child Care Professionals and School Board Officials

About the author

Noel Young teaches Early Childhood Education in the Faculty of Community Services at George Brown College in Toronto. He has extensive experience with school-based child care (as a staff member, centre supervisor and finally as a child care program advisor with a Toronto-area school board). For many years, Noel has also been an active child care advocate and workshop leader, speaking extensively to educators and child care professionals throughout Ontario. He was one of the founders of Ontario's first school-age child care conference in 1989 and of Exploring Environments: A Newsletter About School-Age Child Care.

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Introduction

The school/child care connection is simple common sense. When almost 20 per cent of children in some communities come to school without breakfast one or more times a week [1] and more than 40 per cent of six- to 12-year-olds go home to an empty house at the end of the day,[2] educators must inevitably be concerned about the care and well-being of children during out-of-school hours.

It is no longer possible to say, as 19th-century school officials did, that teachers are responsible for children only "as long as they can see them." Such rigid divisions of responsibility between school and out-of-school services such as child care have outlived their usefulness. While schools remain responsible for activities outlined by the curriculum, we now recognize that learning occurs on a continuum, starting in infancy and including experiences in a wide range of settings.

Today in Ontario, school boards and child care centres share responsibility for increasing numbers of children. Over the past 15 years, government policies have moved from prohibiting to allowing to mandating the development of licensed child care services in neighbourhood schools. Until recently, the child care involvement of school boards has been conducted in partnership with independent community agencies. In June 1993, changes in the Education Act made it possible for school boards to directly operate child care services if they so wish.

For a growing number of Ontario communities, the school/child care connection is already part of daily life. According to the Ministry of Community and Social Services, almost 42,000 Ontario children from infancy to age 12 are enrolled in school-based child care programs. Fifty-seven per cent of the new child care spaces in the province since 1985 have been school based. [3]

Almost 40 per cent of all children enrolled in licensed child care centres are school attenders.[4] Finally, the demand for child care for this age group continues to increase. Between 1985 and 1990, child care services for Ontario's school-age children expanded by 300 per cent. [5]

The school/child care connection may be common sense, but new initiatives are never without problems. As Michael Fullan notes, "It may not be easy to organize common sense — or rather to prevent other factors from overcoming it when the going gets tough." [6] Scarce space and resources, unfamiliar regulations and rising community expectations can become irritants for all.

As the demand for care grows, finding solutions to these problems has become an increasingly urgent task for educators and child care professionals. At the same time, both parents and politicians are recognizing the benefits of this care being located in schools. Fortunately, the school-based child care strategy is well supported by a growing body of Canadian research. Moreover, an impressive number of pilot projects in a range of Ontario communities are helping to chart the way.

This manual has been prepared for everyone involved in planning or implementing school/child care partnerships. Focusing on the care of kindergarten and primary school-age children — the majority of participants in school-based care — it promotes a flexible range of care and recreation services under the umbrella of a school-based community program agency.

The school/child care connection encompasses:

- the organization of child groupings, staffing, space and materials
- the activities children experience in both settings
- learning plans for individuals and groups
- the role of the two institutions in family life
- the institutional needs of both school and child care
- the policy framework established by school boards, municipalities and other levels of government.

While there is no one formula for establishing school/child care partnerships, communities will benefit from considering the five issues described below.

Co-operation versus integration ... Between co-operative partnership and complete integration is a continuum of ways for school and child care centres to work together. Recent changes to the Education Act make it possible for schools and child care centres to create an integrated, seamless day, where children move effortlessly from one part of the day to the next.

Continuity and consistency versus diversity ... Continuity and consistency can be an important source of security for children. In some instances, however, diversity in programming and approach is equally important. Sometimes, school and child care staff may want to limit the use of similar themes or activities while at other times considering how experiences in child care reinforce or extend classroom learning.

Supervision versus independence ... Kindergarten and school-age children are moving from the carefully supervised world of early childhood towards the autonomy of adolescence. Children's need for autonomy must, however, be balanced with legitimate adult concerns about safety and liability. Encouraging emerging independence while limiting risk is a central responsibility of teachers, child care staff, principals and child care managers.

Targeting versus universality ... Child care centres have evolved from a tradition of welfare services designed to provide care to families deemed "in need." A number of strategies can make the child care service accessible to more families. These include both part-time care and a broader range of program offerings, such as after-school recreation and nutrition programs, all of which help to distribute more broadly the benefits of a growing public investment in child care.

Flexibility versus stability ... Flexible approaches to service delivery must be balanced with needs for stability and predictability. Programs must ensure that the comings and goings of those needing occasional or part-time care do not detract from the quality of care of those attending more regularly.

About "Caring for Play"

Caring for Play analyzes these issues, identifies options and offers practical advice. Threaded throughout is a recognition that the intricacy of the school and child care connection requires that attention be paid to the needs of both children and parents. At the same time, the policy framework that shapes the activity of both child care and school is also considered.

Caring for Play is designed to explore the many aspects of this puzzle and show how the pieces fit together.

Profiles of Innovation throughout the manual examine how different Ontario communities and school boards have resolved some of the issues.

A case study of a partnership in the fictitious community of Howville is presented, complete with sample forms that can be modified and used without restriction (Howville is named after Toronto teacher Hester How who founded Ontario's first child care centre in 1893). Finally, work sheet exercises are provided in some sections to help school/child care teams place themselves in the discussion.

Section One: Changing Lives and Lifestyles examines the demographic transformation of Ontario and explores how these changes are affecting children's out-of-school lives.

Section Two: Caring About Quality Care reviews the implications of child care quality on children's learning and development.

Section Three: Rules and Regulations... Dollars and Sense describes the legislative and funding framework that shapes the management of local school/child care partnerships.

Section Four: The Role of School Boards discusses how boards can position policy and program initiatives so as to play a leadership role in responding to the changing face of Ontario families and communities.

Section Five: The Mechanics: Operating Issues for School Boards and Child Care Operators analyzes operational issues boards and child care managers should consider when implementing a school-based child care strategy.

Section Six: The School and Child Care Story summarizes the history of partnership between schools, child care services and recreation programs, which predates the turn of the century.

Section Seven: Providing for Play takes a holistic approach to supporting children's development and presents specific strategies for organizing people, space and materials.

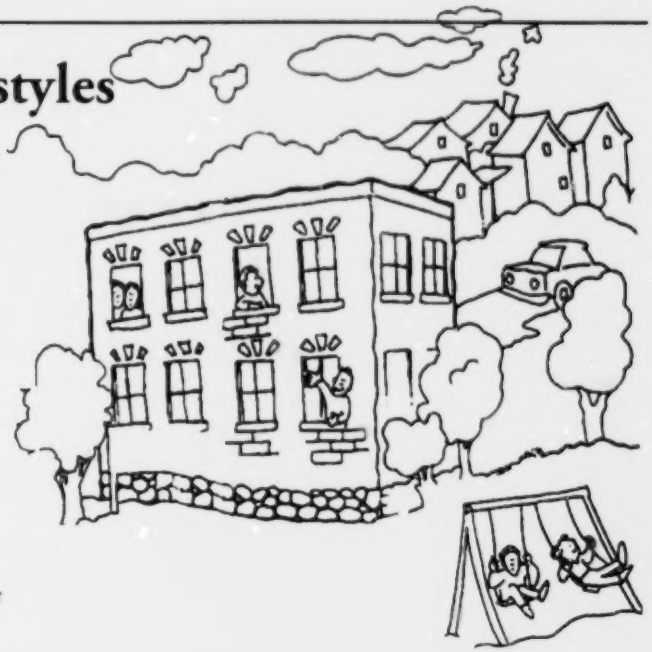
Section Eight: Managing the Connection presents specific strategies for school principals and child care managers to foster effective partnerships in neighbourhood schools.

The **Appendix** provides a list of resources together with a detailed bibliography.

Caring for Play: The School and Child Care Connection documents the challenges now being faced by school principals and child care managers as they work together. To date this partnership has produced a range of solutions in different communities. The strategies explored here are meant to be adapted and realized throughout the province, wherever children learn and play. **Caring for Play** is not the final word on school/child care collaboration. Instead, it invites your participation in the ongoing discussion of these questions, and in caring for play in your own community.

1. George Flynn (1989). Nutritional Habits of Primary School Children. **Catholic School Trustee**. (28)1. Page 20.
2. Norman Park (1993). **School-Age Child Care: Examining Patterns of Care and Parental Attitudes**. The Policy Research Centre on Children, Youth and Families. Page 12.
3. Norman Park in Barnhorst and Johnson (1991). **The State of the Child in Ontario**. Oxford University Press. Page 48.
4. M.C.S.S. Day Nurseries Information System data as of March 31, 1993.
5. A.R.A. Consulting Group (1990). **A Survey of Licensed School-Age Programs in Ontario**. Ministry of Community and Social Services. Page 7.
6. Michael Fullan (1982). **The Meaning of Educational Change**. O.I.S.I.E Press. Page x.
7. Martha Friendly (1991). Address to "Do we need professional school-age child care?" Policy forum, North York, Ontario.

Changing Lives and Lifestyles



It is a difficult time for many working parents and for their children. It is also difficult for those who do not approve of, nor understand, the new realities and pressures families are facing or the new value of gender equality. Hence, the continuing debates about the extent to which parents (e.g., women) should be expected to make sacrifices if they "choose" to have and rear children, and the extent to which society (e.g., government through taxpayers) has a collective responsibility for ensuring that all children are properly cared for and educated.[1]

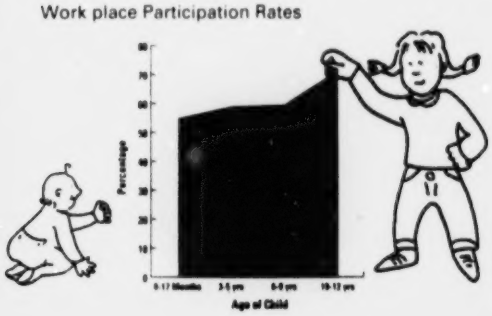
– Donna Lero, 1990

Ontario families have been radically transformed over the past 30 years. Families are smaller. Divorce rates have risen rapidly. Women, including mothers of young children, are key players in the paid work force. These social changes have altered the role of both schools and child care centres. This section examines the impact of changing demographics on children's lives. The focus is on how parental work patterns, combined with children's growing capacity for independence and autonomy, shape child care use for kindergarten and school-age children.

Families Need Child Care

More than one million Ontario children from infancy to age 12 need non-parental child care of one form or another while their parents are employed.[2] While 54.7 per cent of mothers with infants are in the paid work force, the likelihood of a child's mother working for pay increases as her child gets older. Seventy-one per cent of mothers with 10- to 12- year-olds are employed either full- or part-time.[3]

Figure 1
Work place Participation Rates



Source: Data from the Canadian National Child Care Study

For some dual-earner families, the paid employment of both parents may be a matter of choice, with both parents choosing to work in order to improve their standard of living or for personal satisfaction.

For most two-parent families, however, paid employment is essential for economic survival. The number of two-parent families below the poverty line would increase by an estimated 78 per cent if only one person in the household had paid work.[4]

In the case of single-parent families, the economic reality is stark. The absence of affordable, accessible, high-quality child care has a negative impact on the well-being of both children and their parents. With one out of eight Canadian children currently living in a single-parent household, educators and policymakers are justifiably concerned about the long-term implications of the child care crisis.

An increasingly flexible labour market adds a new dimension to an already complex issue. The Canadian National Child Care Study found that almost 45 per cent of parents interviewed worked variations on the standard nine-to-five workday and Monday-to-Friday workweek.[5] Significant numbers of parents worked evening hours on either an occasional or regular basis. Even more parents work weekend shifts.

Parents who work hours outside the regular business day, as well as those who work evening or night shifts, often find it extremely difficult to find adequate, affordable, quality care for their children. Almost one-quarter of Canadian children in self-care arrangements during the week also spent time alone on weekends.[6]

Child care need is not restricted to parents working in the paid labour force. Many families need non-parental care for their children for various reasons. Consider:

- parents who are students (full-time or part-time)
- families in crisis or stress (i.e., because of a birth or death in the family, etc.)
- parents experiencing chronic health problems
- families with a handicapped or chronically ill child
- parents involved in volunteer activities
- parents also providing care for their own parents or other elderly relatives.

Even families with one parent at home use child care services. Many parents involve their children in nursery schools, parent-child drop-in centres and recreation programs, either to give the parent a needed break or for the socializing skills and other benefits those programs can offer to their children.

The Economic Benefits of Meeting the Child Care Challenge

The needs of employers parallel those of families. At a time of increasing global competition, Ontario's labour force is shrinking. Since women workers in their child-bearing years are among the best educated in Canada, their skills are an increasingly significant component of corporate planning.[7]

Even immigration, often promoted as a solution to current and future labour shortages, brings with it a built-in demand for more child care. Fifty per cent of new immigrants are in their child-bearing years (ages 25-44). In these families, both parents will need to work or study so that the family can become established.

As women increase their participation in the work force, and as men assume a more direct role in raising children, helping employees balance work and family responsibilities becomes a major issue for employers. The Conference Board of Canada found that 66 per cent of the employees surveyed reported difficulty balancing their family and on-the-job lives.[8]

This balancing act may be particularly difficult for families with kindergarten and school-age children — particularly those headed by a single parent. The irregularity of the school day and school calendar, combined with the irregular hours worked by many parents, translates into a complex web of child care arrangements once children enter school. The very complexity of those arrangements makes them susceptible to interruption and breakdown. One U.S. workplace survey of 20,000 men and women found that parents using self-care arrangements had significantly higher numbers of days missed, times late for work and times interrupted at work. When they were single parents, these employees had some of the highest rates of absenteeism.[9]

Profile of Innovation

Since 1987 **Sundowners Day Care and Resource Centre** in Windsor has worked in co-operation with other child-serving agencies and both the separate and public school boards to implement a flexible strategy supporting the development of children enrolled in Sundowners' core programs while sharing the benefits with all Windsor children.

At any one time Sundowners is able to care for 200 kindergarten and school-age children in four Windsor and Essex County schools. However, flexible enrollment policies significantly extend this enrollment capacity. Parents may enroll their children in either full-time "wrap-around" service or on a prearranged part-day or part-week schedule. Some children only participate after school and others only during the summer. So although only 200 children participate at any given time, Sundowners' flexible policies allow it to care for approximately 300 children over the year.

Since its establishment, Sundowners has recognized that for many school-age children in the Windsor area, out-of-school child care means self- or sibling care. To respond to the problem this agency:

- actively promotes the value of school-age child care services to parents and teachers
- sponsors a "warm line" service for latchkey children who are at home alone after school (with funding from the Ministry of Community and Social Services)
- helps children aged nine to 12 develop self-care skills through a workshop series entitled "Off to a Good Start"
- offers workshops for parents and teachers who wish to introduce self-care skills to children.

By addressing the issues of latchkey care in a way that respects, informs and extends parental choices, Sundowners actively supports children's gradual growth towards independence and autonomy.

Beginning in 1989, with assistance from the federal government's Child Care Initiatives Fund, Sundowners broadened its focus to improve continuity between school and child care programs for children with identified behavioural difficulties. Child care workers were hired to work with classroom teachers and child care staff to co-ordinate approaches taken with individual children. Joint training sessions for both school and child care staff were initiated and protocols were developed to strengthen communication between the two staff groups.

Although those children enrolled in child care were the targeted beneficiaries of the program, many benefits were shared with their classmates.

Assessing Community Needs

The changing lives and lifestyles of families are redefining the role of neighbourhood schools. To manage these changes, principals and child care supervisors require a detailed appreciation of:

- the support families require to ensure adequate supervision of children when parental care is not available
- children's needs for play and for opportunities to develop leisure skills and interests
- families' needs for nutritional support before school and at lunchtime
- families' ability to pay for these services.

While a school-based child care service will not meet the full range of child care needs in a community, it can provide a reliable institutional foundation upon which such solutions can be constructed. To understand these interconnected needs, communities must determine what services currently exist, their cost and usage.

Census data regarding family incomes, child population and housing types provides useful barometers of child care need. Discussions with community residents, child care service providers and other professionals working in the community (i.e., public health nurses, clergy, community development workers, etc.) will help to identify service gaps. Finally, the distribution of a questionnaire similar to Figure 2 is an important part of the needs-assessment process. This particular survey differs from similar questionnaires in that it:

- only gathers information about the child care needs of parents with kindergarten and school-age children attending a particular school
- recognizes how parents' care arrangements for this age group require a blend of supervision, recreation and in some instances nutrition programs.

By collecting information on individual children (rather than families), this survey makes it possible for communities to track the care and recreation arrangements for specific age groups of children and identify when services might be merged.

Return rates can be improved if the purpose of the survey is communicated before distribution and feedback is provided after. Circulate the form to all children on a Monday of a regular school week, to be returned by Friday of the same week. Some schools find it helpful to have a lucky draw, with each child who returns a survey (in an anonymous blank envelope) eligible for the draw.

1. Donna Lero and Irene Kyle in Johnston and Barnhorst (1991). **Children, Families and Public Policy in the 90s. Page 25.**
2. Donna Lero et al. (1992). **The Canadian National Child Care Study: Parental Work Patterns and Child Care Needs.** Statistics Canada. Page 137.
3. Allan Pence (ed.) (1992). **The Canadian National Child Care Study: Canadian child care in context.** Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Page 420.
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7. Ontario Women's Directorate (1992). **Work and Family: The Crucial Balance.**
8. Judith MacBride-King (1989). Balancing Work and Family Responsibilities. **Canadian Business Review.** Autumn. Page 18.
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Figure 2

Howville Elementary School

Community Child Care and Play Opportunity Survey

Many parents of children attending Howville Elementary School have expressed interest in a range of care and recreation programs for their children. We have been directed by our parent advisory committee to investigate the establishment of services for the next school year. You can assist in this task by completing the questionnaire below and returning it with your child by Friday.

Please note: Each student has received a copy of the questionnaire. If you have more than one child attending Howville E.S., complete ONE form for EACH child. This will make it much easier for us to plan for all of the age groups within the school. We do appreciate the extra effort this requires on your part.

Please have your child return his or her form sealed in the envelope provided. All responses are strictly confidential. A summary of findings will be included in our next family newsletter. *Thank you for your assistance.*

Please tell us some basic information about this child and your family:

1. Your child was born in what year? _____
2. Your child is: male ☐ female ☐
3. Which of the following best describes your family:

- ☐ 2 parents work full-time
- ☐ 2 parents work part-time
- ☐ 1 parent works full-time/1 stay-at-home parent
- ☐ 1 parent works part-time/1 parent works full-time
- ☐ single parent works full-time
- ☐ single parent works part-time
- ☐ single parent at home

Tell us about supervision and care arrangements for your child last week:

4. Was your child supervised by someone other than yourself or your partner last week? Please indicate (✔) on chart below.

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri
before school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
after school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
evenings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Saturday	Sunday
mornings	☐	☐
afternoons	☐	☐
evenings	☐	☐

5. How much do you pay for this arrangement?

$ ____/day $ ____/week OR $ ____/month

6. Was your child in self-care or the care of an older sibling last week?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please indicate (✔) time periods when your child was in a self- or sibling care arrangement?

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri
before school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
lunch hour	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
after school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
evenings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Saturday	Sunday
mornings	☐	☐
afternoons	☐	☐
evenings	☐	☐

7. What were your primary reasons for using self- or sibling supervision last week ? Reasons (you may indicate more than one):

- ☐ it was only a very short period of time
- ☐ my child likes the independence
- ☐ no other alternatives available
- ☐ we can't afford alternatives at this time
- ☐ other (please explain)

8. What were your care arrangements for this child on the last P.D. day? (You may choose more than one arrangement.):

- ☐ attended group child care
- ☐ stayed at home of a caregiver
- ☐ attended a recreation program
- ☐ accompanied a parent to work
- ☐ stayed home alone
- ☐ stayed home with a parent
- ☐ stayed home with a sibling
- ☐ visited at a friend's home
- ☐ was cared for by a relative
- ☐ other (please describe)

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9. Do you use any other out-of-school services currently available in this community (i.e., recreation programs, lessons, cubs, brownies, heritage language, etc.)?
☐ Yes ☐ No

10. If not, why not?
- ☐ too expensive
- ☐ I have concerns about program quality
- ☐ my child isn't interested
- ☐ too far
- ☐ wrong days/time
- ☐ other reason (please describe)

11. Would you enroll your child in any of the following programs if they were available through Howville Community Programs?

- ☐ art classes
- ☐ team sports
- ☐ cooking club
- ☐ gymnastics
- ☐ jazz dancing
- ☐ heritage language
- ☐ other (specify)

Approximately how much would you be willing to pay for a one-hour session with instruction?
- ☐ $3/session
- ☐ $5/session
- ☐ $10/session
- ☐ $15/session
- ☐ other amount (please specify)

12. If before-school supervised breakfast program were offered, would this child use it?
- ☐ occasionally
- ☐ frequently
- ☐ never

How much would you be willing to pay for meal and supervision/day? $_____

13. Does your child currently participate in our supervised lunch-hour program?

- ☐ occasionally
- ☐ frequently
- ☐ never

14. Would your child take advantage of a hot-meal program at lunch hour if it were offered?

- ☐ occasionally
- ☐ frequently
- ☐ never

How much would you be willing to pay/day? $_____

15. Do you have younger children for whom you must also make care arrangements? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you have any other thoughts you would like us to be aware of?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
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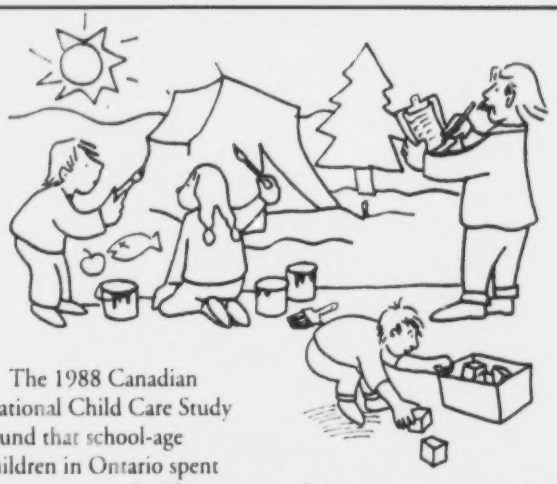
Thank you for your assistance. Seal your completed form in the envelope provided and have your child return it to school.

Caring About Quality Care



Today ... most of the Canadian provinces and American states [have] two collective service networks for young children created at different times, with different orientations, and operating within parallel governmental structures. Consequently numerous problems of harmony, overlapping and coordination are being encountered in a period when child development calls for special attention to continuity, stability and quality. [1]

Madeleine Baillargeon, Raquel Bestalel-Presser, Marlyse Joncas and Helene Larouche, 1993

As the economic and social forces driving child care demand increase, questions regarding the quality of children's care arrangements become more urgent. While parents and employers benefit immediately from affordable, accessible child care, the quality of care provided may have long-term implications for the young children who participate. This section gives a brief overview of what is known about the care arrangements of kindergarten and school-age children in Ontario, including issues such as where and for how long children are in non-parental care. It also examines the impact of child care quality on children's learning and development, paying particular attention to the issue of latchkey or self-care.

Where Are Ontario Children When School Is Out?

Parents look to a variety of care arrangements to fill the gaps between the school and workday. These include:

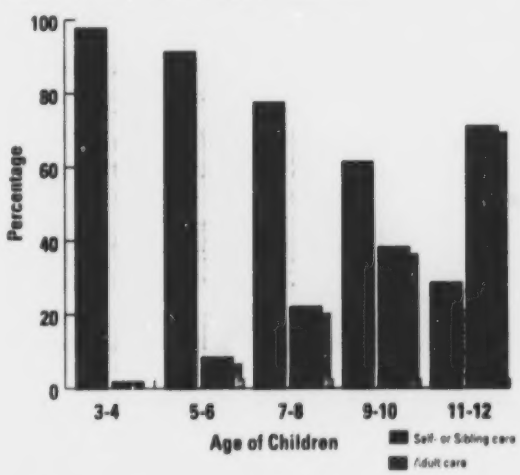
- care in a licensed child care program
- at-home care by a relative or nanny in the child's own home
- care in a caregiver's home
- care by parents at their place of work
- care in an unlicensed recreation program
- school lunch programs and after-school enrichment programs
- self- or sibling care.

As shown in Figure 1, the older they are, the more likely it is that children will be in an arrangement where there is no adult present. This is particularly true for children from single-parent families. [2]

The 1988 Canadian National Child Care Study found that school-age children in Ontario spent between one and 35 hours per week in care arrangements (not including hours in school) with the average being 15 hours.[3] The average for kindergarten-age children was of course even higher. Once professional development days, school breaks and summer holidays are considered, a child of working parents easily spends more than 8,000 hours in child care arrangements of various sorts during their years of kindergarten and primary school.

Parents select their kindergarten and school-age children's care arrangement by balancing a variety of interconnected variables, including the hours when the care is available, its cost, geographical convenience, the care arrangement used by younger siblings, their perceptions of quality and finally the child's preferences. Not surprisingly, cost is a critical (although not necessarily the most critical) component of the decision. Significantly, cost factors may be more important to families with lower income. One U.S. study has suggested that when

Figure 1: Is Anyone Minding the Children?



Source: Adapted from Norm Park, 1994

financial resources are insufficient, parents may be forced to select care arrangements that are incompatible with their values and perceptions of their child's best interest.[4]

Good Care/Bad Care — Does It Make a Difference?

Research into the effect of infant, toddler and preschool child care on children's growth and development has demonstrated that when children participate in good quality child care there is no negative effect on their well-being or development. In fact there is sometimes positive benefit. Poor quality child care, however, has been shown to have negative consequences for young children's development.[5]

As child care services that wrap around the school day have become more of a presence in communities, researchers have shown greater interest in studying the developmental outcomes that result from a kindergarten or school-age child's participation — or non-participation — in out-of-school care. Given the relationship being demonstrated between children's initial adjustment to school and their long-term school success,[6] such interest will undoubtedly increase. Although the research is still at an early stage, findings with significant implications for parents, educators and child care professionals are now being reported.

When a child is in self- or sibling care

After two decades of examining the effects of the latchkey experience on children, worrisome reports of negative developmental outcomes continue to appear in the literature. Some researchers have reported that children in self-care are more likely to smoke at an earlier age and more likely to experiment with drugs.[7] Still other researchers have theorized that self care arrangements may have a positive impact on children by promoting independence and responsibility. While such outcomes have never been demonstrated, it does seem likely that self-care becomes an appropriate (and inevitable) developmental milestone for all children at some point.

Coleman and Robinson have suggested a list of risk factors that interact with each other to determine whether children are ready for the responsibility and independence of self-care.[8]

These include:

- how long the child is on his or her own
- the time of the day and week when the child is unsupervised
- the child's age and maturity
- the relationship with his or her parent(s)
- family circumstances (i.e., income, number of parents in the home)
- parent's ability to exercise control over children's behaviour
- children's temperament
- the neighbourhood in which they live

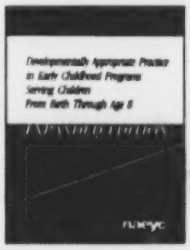
It would be comforting to think that the tens of thousands of Ontario children in self-care arrangements during out-of-school hours were there because of a measured decision on the part of their parent as to the child's needs and abilities and the potential risks involved. However, the Canadian National Child Care Study found that 51 per cent of Ontario parents whose children were in self-care would have preferred another form of care. Among these parents, a lack of alternatives and their cost were the most frequently cited reasons for parents not using a more preferred care arrangement.[9]

For many parents, leaving a younger child with an older sibling often appears to offer some measure of security, perhaps a middle ground between adult supervision and self-care. However, a 1992 California study, unexpectedly found that children in sibling care reported lower self-esteem in five of six self-competence domains.[10] While recognizing that many socio-economic and family variables were not tested in the study, the authors refer to other studies of sibling caretakers that suggest that older siblings may use a very different caretaking style than

Figure 2

Defining Quality Care

As concerns about child care quality have grown, a number of efforts to define quality have been undertaken. The following are proving particularly influential.



Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children From Birth Through Age 8 (1987) has become an important standard by which many programs in both the school and child care systems judge themselves. Available from National Association for the Education of Young Children. 1500 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036; 800/424-2460.

Standards for Quality School-Age Child Care (1993) has been produced by the U.S.-based National Association of Elementary School Principals to promote the maintenance of quality child care programs for school-age children. Available from N.A.E.S.P., 1615 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314.

Assessing School-Age Child Care Quality (1991) is a program evaluation tool developed by the School Age Child Care Project at Wellesley College. Available from SACC Publications, Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA 02181; 617/283-2525.

parents and may tend to be arbitrary enforcers of rules — depending on their level of socio-emotional development.

When children are in the care of an adult

Just as the effect of self- or sibling care on school-age children's development can vary depending on a range of circumstances, the same seems to be true for children in the care of an adult. Researchers, together with innovative educators and child care practitioners, have begun to look for the positive outcomes that might result from children's participation in well-designed out-of-school programs. They are being greatly assisted in this task by the work of U.S.-based groups as diverse as the National Association for the Education of Young Children (N.A.E.Y.C.) and the National Elementary School Principal's Association (N.E.S.P.A.) and the School Age Child Care Project at Wellesley College. (See Figure 2.)

One study typical of this effort found evidence that it is possible to "infuse" into the informal setting of school-age child care opportunities that promote children's cognitive and social development.[11] Staff with a good understanding of child development were able to promote problem solving, reading proficiency, independence and co-operation.

However, participation in group child care programs can also have negative consequences for school-age children. One U.S. study showed that children in both centre and sitter care were more likely to be perceived by teachers as being "disruptive" and to have poorer social skills than children in either self-care or parental care.[12] Significantly, the group child care program used in the study was a non-school-based, commercial program. Both Ontario and other studies have suggested that school location and program auspice are both important predictors of quality.[13]

As a result of these and other studies, a consensus is now emerging that poor quality care is as harmful to school-age children as it is to their younger siblings.[14]

The Ecology of Child Care Quality

To date, researchers examining the care arrangements of kindergarten and school-age children have focused on comparing the effects of different forms of care. However, for most children, the complete picture includes one or more arrangement, together with school and school-sponsored programs such as lunch supervision and after-school enrichment programs. Social scientists are only now beginning to examine the cumulative effect this patchwork has on children.

Quebec researchers recently studied the relationship of kindergarten and child care environments to children's social and language development. Quality was measured in both kindergarten classrooms and child care centres using the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (E.C.E.R.S.). They found children to be enrolled in care and classroom environments that they characterized as good, bad and indifferent in quality. At the end of the study they conclude that:

A child who is exposed to inconsistencies between the quality of the kindergarten and child care program may be at risk, as would the child who is in consistently low-quality arrangements. However, the child who attends two high-quality environments concurrently would be at an advantage.[15]

The interrelationship of the different parts of children's days probably changes as they get older. The cumulative effect will also be different for different aspects of the child's life. For example, if we consider the food consumption of a nine- or 10-year-old, we must also take into consideration his or her changing need for supervision and independence. For example a typical child might:

- make her own breakfast in the morning
- bring her lunch to eat under loose supervision in the school lunch program
- attend a community sports program one day/week after school
- go home alone the other four days and watch television.

As a direct consequence of such a care arrangement, this child may well take in between 60 and 70 per cent of her nutritional intake on school days with minimal adult supervision. Of equal concern, she is also developing a sedentary lifestyle characterized by large amounts of television viewing. If this same child goes to a "babysitter" after school, she might well eat better — but would probably be as sedentary as the latchkey child. She would certainly watch considerably more television then if she attended a licensed before- and after-school program.

However, enrolling such children in licensed child care may not be the answer either. In an analysis of enrollment patterns in licensed school-age child care in Ontario, Park has described school-age children as "voting with their feet" beginning at age nine and leaving licensed child care settings.[16] It seems likely that as children get older, a critical and very measurable element of quality is the extent to which the program appeals to and challenges the child. Most nine-year-olds are at, or approaching, an age when they need access to an evolving range of experiences which can support their expanding interests, mobility and independence. This means that the program must be challenging and attractive so as to encourage children's attendance. It must also flexibly accommodate the child's participation in other community programs and a gradual progression in the direction of self-care and unsupervised play in the community.

When communities adopt an ecological approach to looking at children's development, they inevitably find themselves drawn to looking at out-of-school supervision issues in the course of

examining a host of other educational questions. They recognize both the range of influences in the child's life along with the child's developmental and learning needs. Viewed in this way, a school health initiative becomes a multi-faceted strategy that includes providing:

- an active, play-based child care program during all out-of-school periods (including before and after school, lunchtime, P.D. days and holidays)
- provision of a friendly lunch-hour environment conducive to developing good food habits
- optional nutritional supplements for those who wish them before school and at lunch time
- classroom instruction as children get older about the Canada Food Guide and the health benefits of physical activity
- appropriate modeling of good nutritional habits by teachers, parents and child care staff
- opportunities to build on the classroom physical education program and develop physical skills and interests in out-of-school programs
- encouragement of physical activity during play periods by both teachers and child care staff
- communication between all of the adults in the lives of individual children about children's health needs.

Inevitably an ecological understanding of children's development leads us towards more collaborative approaches to delivering community services such as nutrition and child care services, together with out-of-school arts and recreational programs. However sensible such approaches may be, they run counter to the way in which educators, child care professionals and recreationists have come to see their role. The policy framework currently in place in Ontario was never designed to accommodate the range of needs now being placed on it. Communities committed to providing quality care for children will need a vision of what quality looks like. They also need to understand the current funding and regulatory frameworks that shape neighbourhood institutions.

1. Madeleine Baillargeon et al. (1993). One Child, Many Environments: School-based Day Care Programs. **The Alberta Journal of Educational Research** (39) 1. Page 128.
2. Donna S. Lero and Lois M. Brockman (1993). Single Parent Families in Canada: A Closer Look. In Hudson, J. and Galaway, B. **Single Parent Families: Perspectives on Research and Policy.** Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing. Page 111.
3. Allan Pence, ed. (1992). **The Canadian National Child Care Study: Canadian child care in context.** Page 425.
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6. For example K. Alexander and D. Entwisle (1988). "Achievement in the First Two Years of School: Patterns and Process." **Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development** (53) (1988).
7. Bryan E. Robinson, Bobbie H. Rowland and Mick Coleman (1986). **Latchkey Kids: Unlocking Doors For Children and Their Families.** Page 59.
8. Bryan E. Robinson, Bobbie H. Rowland and Mick Coleman (1986). **Latchkey Kids: Unlocking Doors for Children and Their Families.** Page 59.
9. Norman Park (1993). **School-Age Child Care: Examining Patterns of Care and Parental Attitudes.** The Policy Research Centre on Children, Youth and Families. Page 26.
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13. Sharon West (1988). A study on compliance with the Day Nurseries Act at full-day child care centres in Metropolitan Toronto. Toronto, Ministry of Community and Social Services. Norman Park (1992). **A Comparative Study of School-Aged Child Care Programs.** Toronto: Ministry of Education.
14. Ellen Jacobs, et al. (1993). **School-Age Child Care: A Preliminary Report. Proceedings from the Child Care Policy and Research Symposium,** Occasional Paper #2. Child Care Resource and Research Unit, University of Toronto. Gillian Doherty (1991). **Quality Matters in Child Care.** Huntsville: Jesmond Publishing.
15. Madeleine Baillargeon et al. (1993). One Child, Many Environments: School-based Day Care Programs. **The Alberta Journal of Educational Research** (39) 1. Page 128.
16. Norman Park (1991). **The State of the Child in Ontario.** Oxford University Press. Page 54.

Rules and Regulations... Dollars and Sense: The Public Policy Framework

In this debate we are concerned with what shatters the unity of the child's world and what fragments his life among a series of agents, services and institutions. Often, as I listened during my peregrinations across the province, I thought: Here is one who wants control over the child's head and here is another who wants control over his body. Someone else wants his soul and yet another his mind. By the time they have acquired all these parts of him which they want in order to fulfill themselves, the poor child will have nothing left to call his own.[1]

- Laurier LaPierre

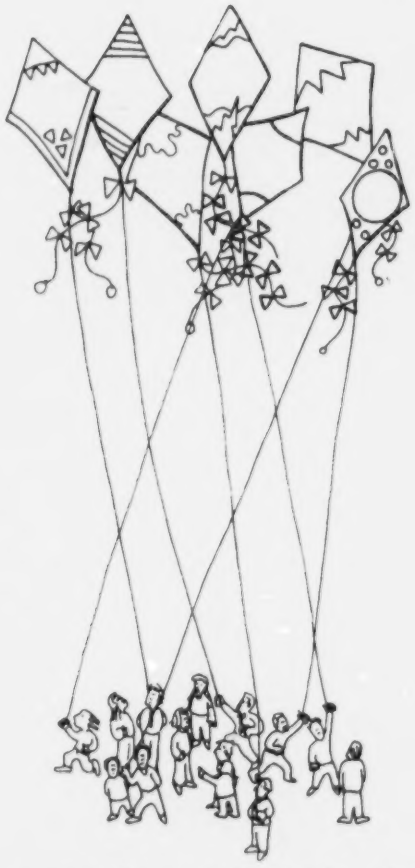
Programs for kindergarten and school-age children have developed in the parallel service streams of education, social services and recreation. Although the aims of these services often overlap, working through the maze of requirements set out by various levels and departments of government demands both persistence and skill.

By examining each piece of the education/child care/recreation puzzle, communities can visualize the way services might look if a more integrated approach was adopted for families with children between the ages of three and 12. This section interprets the current policy framework — jurisdictional issues, regulations and funding — in the context of community needs and the service components that have developed, or are developing, in local communities.

Child Care As an Essential Community Service

The election of the Liberal government in 1985 (and the accompanying N.D.P.-Liberal Accord) changed the face of child care policy in Ontario. Two years later came the **New Directions in Child Care Policy Statement.** For the first time, child care services were officially promoted as "an essential community service." Key to this change was the requirement that all new schools in Ontario be designed to include a child care centre.

In 1992, the provincial government released **Setting the Stage: A Consultation Paper on Child Care Reform in Ontario.** With this paper the government, like many others across North America, recognized the central role of child care services in supporting both economic recovery and social reform. At subsequent hearings across the province, parents, child care managers, educators and others with an interest in child care were able to make their views known. The following principles were identified by the government as essential to child care reform:



- new public funding will be directed to non-profit services
- quality is the cornerstone of the child care system
- child care services must be affordable
- child care services must be accessible
- the child care system must be soundly managed.

The barriers to developing a comprehensive child care system are many. Given current fiscal restraints, the child care system needed to meet Ontario's requirements in the coming decades will have to be built, at least in part, on foundations already in place in local communities. The continued development of overlapping services for young children is not only undesirable but unaffordable.

Ontario's Child Care System — Who does what? Who pays for what?

Ontario's child care system is a privatized community service. Independent non-profit agencies receive limited public funding and are required to meet provincial regulations. Because child care has historically been viewed as a welfare service, it falls under the mandate of the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS). The ministry monitors the delivery of services through the work of professional staff in 13 area offices.

Each area office is responsible for service planning, administering the Day Nurseries Act and providing consultative support for individual child care managers. Because considerable local discretion is allowed, discrepancies exist between different parts of the province when it comes to interpreting regulations, establishing funding priorities, etc.

As child care reform advances, new planning and management structures are being put in place by area offices. Advisory groups, which usually include representatives of all major stakeholders (including school boards), will have an important role to play in advising the ministry on issues such as funding priorities, service development targets, etc.

Child care is funded primarily through parent fees. Approximately 50 per cent of the children enrolled in licensed child care centres are subsidized under the provisions of the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP). While many Ontario families are eligible to have their fees subsidized, the lack of subsidy dollars and the growing cost of the service have resulted in an affordability crisis for low- to moderate-income families.

Direct public funding

Capital grants have been provided to new non-profit child care centres since 1980 through a succession of initiatives. With the growing recognition of child care as an essential community service, there has also been a steady increase in direct public funding from the provincial government.

Today in Ontario, non-profit centres are eligible for direct operating grants, which help to maintain salary levels while keeping fees to parents somewhat lower than they would otherwise be. In 1993 these grants contributed more than $5,000 to each full-time staff's salary.

Regulations — the Day Nurseries Act

To operate a child care program for more than five unrelated children, the service must be licensed by the Ministry of Community and Social Services. Licenses are granted when programs demonstrate that they satisfy the minimum standards of practice required in the **Day Nurseries Act.**

The standards established by the Act represent minimum standards to be enforced in all licensed care settings. Among other things they establish requirements for:

- physical environment (amount of space/child, type of space, windows, etc.)
- staff/child ratios
- staff and supervisor qualifications.

Research in numerous jurisdictions (including Ontario) shows that when regulations are in place, institutions are more likely to follow the required standards.[2] However, because these are only minimum standards, defining quality care is an important task for program operators.

Other regulatory requirements

Licensed child care centres must also meet regulatory standards set out in the Food Premises Regulations (related to the serving of food), the Fire Marshal's Act, municipal zoning bylaws and the building code. These requirements are built into the licensing process. They can affect not only new services but also existing programs changing locations or even rooms. For example:

- the local public health department may require that windows have screens
- if the Building Code has changed since the school was first built, a centre may be required to replace ceiling tiles in a classroom when it installs a washroom in the room
- the dishwashing facilities, which have been used by the school's lunch program for years, may not be adequate if they are to be used in a licensed child care program because they do not meet standards of the Food Premises Regulations (which requires the compliance of child care centres but not schools).

Child care managers must also meet the requirements of the **Corporations Act,** the **W.H.M.I.S. Act,** the **Employment Standards Act,** the Unemployment Insurance Commission, the **Ontario Human Rights Code** and any other relevant federal or provincial legislation affecting the operation of a business.

Home child care

For a variety of reasons (including cost, absence of alternatives and personal preferences), many working parents select home care arrangements for their children. These care providers, usually operating out of their homes, are not required to meet any regulatory standards if they care for five or fewer children. Parents who work shifts or on weekends may find it easier to satisfy their child care needs in this setting rather than in group care.

The **Day Nurseries Act** also licenses home child care agencies through procedures and requirements different from group care. Home child care agencies screen prospective caregivers and match them up with families. A home visitor visits the child care home regularly, provides on-call consultation and ongoing training for caregivers. The ministry spot-checks the agency's records and some of the homes on an annual basis. This model has been found to measurably improve the quality of care provided in home settings.

Fewer than 11 per cent of school-age children in Ontario are cared for in either licensed or unlicensed family home settings compared with almost 30 per cent of preschoolers.[3]

There are a number of reasons for this discrepancy:

- many caregivers prefer to fill up "space" with a child who is present the full day and can be charged a full fee
- when school-age children are included, the age range of children becomes too wide for some caregivers to manage
- while home care is often less expensive than group care for younger children, the higher ratios permitted in group care for children over six make it more affordable.

School Boards and Child Care

Until recently, school boards were prohibited from operating licensed child care services. Consequently boards wishing to become involved in child care have done so through partnerships with community agencies. In June 1993, amendments to the **Education Act** were approved to enable Ontario school boards to:

"establish, operate and maintain day nurseries within the meaning of the Day Nurseries Act, subject to that Act."

Although this change is not likely to impact immediately on existing partnership arrangements, it may promote a more direct role for school boards in future years.

Currently, all Ontario school boards are mandated by the Ministry of Education to provide supervision for children during lunch hours. Demand for the service is extensive throughout the province. Because collective agreements customarily require that teachers be given a 40-minute uninterrupted lunch break, many boards have made provision to hire staff to supervise lunch rooms.

Some boards also fund extracurricular recreational enrichment programs. Other boards make space available to social recreation agencies or local municipal recreation departments. In many schools, teacher-volunteers offer programs for periods during the school year.

Profile of Innovation

At **Clinton Public School** in Toronto, the school's Lunch Supervision Program provides lunch-hour supervision to more than 110 children every day. Down the hall, the licensed school-age child care program also offers lunch supervision for 70 children enrolled in its service. These children are supervised by their after-school child care staff person before going outside to play with friends participating in the "official" school Lunch Program. While each child has a caregiver responsible for monitoring his or her whereabouts, there is movement back and forth when children want to have lunch with friends in the other program.

Children attending both lunch arrangements can purchase a noon meal from the child care operated "Hot Meal Counter," which is taken to eat with their friends. Children's food selections are guided by child care staff to ensure compliance with the Canada Food Guide.

Parents of children in both programs enjoy the flexibility of being able to purchase a meal as needed and appreciate the consistently high nutritional standards the child care centre must meet as a condition of the Day Nurseries Act. For the past year, the cost of food has been subsidized as part of a pilot project established by the Toronto Board of Education. For children who attend the wrap-around child care program on a regular basis, the presence of child care staff at the lunch hour provides continuity.

Both programs are supervised by the child care supervisor who works closely with the school principal.

Recreation and Child Care

Many municipal recreation departments and community organizations operate social-recreation programs during out-of-school hours. These programs may be designed to develop skills in a specific area (such as swimming or gymnastics). Or they may seek to give children opportunities to socialize in a safe, informal and relaxed setting (as in a boys' and girls' club). During the regular school year, programs typically operate on specific days for a designated period of time. During summer months and school breaks, recreation programs may provide more comprehensive care.

When available, these programs become part of some parents' child care arrangements — particularly those with older school-age children and those who only need part-time care. Because there are currently no provincial standards directing how they perform their child care function and programs are heavily subsidized by municipalities, these programs usually have lower fees than licensed child care programs.

Communities may choose to integrate out-of-classroom services for kindergarten and school-age children under one umbrella. If carefully done, integration can:

- make it easier to build links between school and out-of-school services
- provide "on site" supervision of part-time recreation staff
- broaden the choices available to children and parents
- allow the child care centre to build bridges to the broader community
- ensure that lower-cost, unregulated programs do not undermine the financial viability of licensed child care services.

1. Laurier LaPierre (1979). **To Herald a Child**. Page 18.
2. Norman Park (1992). **A Comparative Study of Out-of-School Care Programs**. Toronto: Ministry of Education. Page 37. Gillian Doherty (1991). **Quality Matters in Child Care**. Huntsville: Jesmond Publishing. Page 101.
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The Role of School Boards

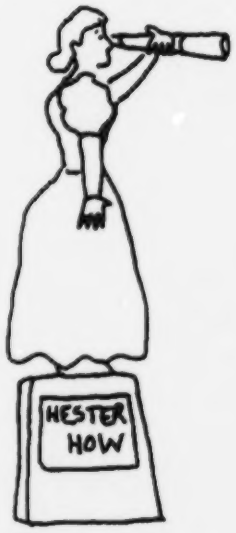
Regardless of who initiates the planning for school-linked services, the district superintendent and board of education must be involved from the beginning and see themselves as equals with other community agency executives involved in the collaboration process. Individual schools or school principals need the committed involvement of district leadership to pave the way for meaningful restructuring and delivery of integrated services.[1]

- Jeanne Jehl and Michael Kirst

Child care is good for schools. It brings parents into schools on a daily basis and generates good will by helping parents balance work and family responsibilities. Child care also builds bridges to business and helps school boards maximize the use of existing publicly funded buildings.

Child care initiatives also bring numerous challenges. For many school board staff, child care initiatives require a collaborative leadership style that may not have been emphasized in their previous leadership training. For others it requires a rethinking of how they view their role and the role of the board in general. For this reason many boards find it helpful to take a comprehensive approach that makes child care an integral component of overall strategic plans.

This section provides a framework for guiding the school/child care connection in ways that make sense for schools, child care centres and the communities they serve. After looking at a range of key policy areas, it will conclude with a brief discussion of the advantages of school boards directly operating licensed child care services.



A Vision of Collaboration

Five questions need to be asked and answered by trustees charting the future course of the school/child care connection.

- What is the role of schools in helping families balance work and family responsibilities?
- How can child care services enhance or support the work of the school system?
- How will the board's commitment to program quality be reflected?
- How should schools, child care operators and other community institutions work together?
- How can schools support individual child care services without straining resources?

Answering these questions establishes the core principles that will guide a board's work in this area. Some boards have found it useful to define a philosophical approach to the school and child care connection (see Figure 1).

Child Care Policies and the Board's Strategic Plan

Like other board initiatives, child care must be carefully planned to ensure accountability. Accordingly, a school board's strategic plan might set:

- specific service targets (perhaps phased in over a five-year period)
- specific goals for system-wide communication and co-ordination
- specific expectations for local schools to develop their own collaboration/communication plan
- specific expectations for including child care in board curriculum initiatives.

Figure 1

Howville Board of Education

School and Child Care: A Statement of Philosophy

We believe that healthy children are essential to the long-term health of this community. Children's elementary school experiences provide the foundation for later success. Ensuring that these experiences are of high quality and meet Ministry of Education guidelines is this school board's primary task.

We also believe that during out-of-school hours, children need opportunities:

- for play
- to develop significant friendships with peers
- to complement and extend in school learning through participation in high-quality recreation experiences of their own selection
- to begin the transition towards being active members of their community.

We recognize that parents maintain ultimate responsibility for the care and development of their children. We therefore support mechanisms to encourage parent involvement in decisions affecting the operation of any school-based child care service. We also support the availability of flexible services that parents can access according to their specific needs.

We believe that our role in the delivery of a high-quality and comprehensive child care system is that of a partner. We therefore support the efforts of parents and child care professionals to advocate for funding and policy measures from the appropriate levels of government.

We believe that school-based child care is an integral part of community development. It creates jobs and builds connections between children and families while providing opportunities for skill development among youth.

Developing Policies and Procedures

Trustees and senior board staff set the tone for the school/child care connection by the way they consult with the child care community. Many problems are avoided if a comprehensive approach to developing child care policy is adopted. Such an approach would involve consulting with all interested stakeholders in a meaningful way:

Internal Stakeholders	External Stakeholders
• trustees	• child care operators
• superintendents	• family home care agencies
• principals	• parents
• teachers	• M.C.S.S. Area Office Staff
• caretakers	• ECE College faculty
• child care co-ordinator	• Public Health
• parent groups	• Municipal Social Services
	• child care co-ordinating/ planning/support body
	• local child care organizations and coalitions

Child care advisory councils

The development of a child care policy should not be separated from other board operations. Many board initiatives will have implications for child care centres and parents. Changes in bussing arrangements, kindergarten scheduling, out-of-school enrichment programs, heritage language, caretaking, etc. can all impact on child care, either negatively or positively.

Some boards have found it helpful to establish an advisory committee or reference council with broad representation of internal and external stakeholders to routinely consider the implications of policy development on school-based child care centres. Such a council or committee might:

- advise the board on the implications of particular policy initiatives on child care services
- develop initiatives to support co-ordination and liaison
- establish communication procedures in case of conflicts between child care and school staff.

Responsibilities of School Board Staff

Child care will touch on the responsibilities of many people within the system. It is helpful if responsibilities are clearly identified and communicated throughout the system.

Superintendents

Superintendents can play a key role in supporting local school/child care collaboration. Their responsibilities may include:

- liaising with area office staff of the Ministry of Community and Social Services
- participating in occasional reviews of child care initiatives in schools within their jurisdiction
- encouraging appropriate levels of co-ordination and communication between principals and child care operators.

Principals

Principals are the school officials with the most influence on the success of local partnerships. When they understand the child care needs of parents and are prepared to support the operation of the school-based child care centre, principals can have a major impact on both the quality of care and the financial viability of the program.

Under the **Education Act**, principals are the primary manager of the school building with a mandated responsibility for:

- children's safety
- promoting children's learning and development

- supporting and co-ordinating the work of a professional staff team
- upkeep of the physical plant
- liaison with community.

Many decisions clearly within a principal's mandate (i.e., space allocation, the timing of meetings, kindergarten registration, playground rules, etc.) have a significant impact on the day-to-day running of the child care centre. The extent to which other responsibilities extend to the school-based child care centre is not clear. For example, is the principal responsible for ensuring safety within the child care centre? At what point, and how, can he or she intervene with the upkeep of the child care centre — or with the implementation of the program?

Many boards, recognizing that a school-based child care centre may reflect on the school's image in the community, give principals a "window" on the child care by requiring their membership on the centre's board of directors or advisory committee. The arrangement has many advantages for both parties. For example:

- it is easier for the principal to monitor and influence child care decisions
- principals develop a better understanding of the child care operation and may be able to interpret its needs to board administrators and classroom teachers
- child care boards and parents develop a better understanding of the diverse challenges facing educators.

While these are significant advantages, they do complicate the job of the principal who must be able to differentiate between the dual roles of principal and board or committee member.

Boards can support principals by:

- ensuring they are aware of their legal responsibility as a member of a non-profit board or advisory committee (these can be written into the board's child care handbook)
- giving them access to consultative services and support
- developing clear operating policies for school-based child care programs
- providing for a child care program review process that includes principal participation.

School-child care co-ordinators

Many school boards assign board-wide responsibility for co-ordinating child care initiatives to one individual. In some instances a superintendent, principal or primary consultant assumes this role. In other cases, an individual with a background in Early Childhood Education is hired to co-ordinate the development and operation of school-based child care services. Figure 2 illustrates the scope and diversity of the co-ordinator's job.

Howville Board of Education
Job Description: Child Care Co-ordinator

Role:

The Child Care Co-ordinator is responsible for co-ordinating the ongoing relationship between Howville schools and child care centres through ongoing communication with trustees, principals, teachers, parents, provincial, municipal and community organizations and child care staff and boards of directors.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Assist parents in determining needs and child care alternatives
- Communicate with parents to develop new child care programs where space is available and the need exists
- Work with Transportation Department to ensure bussing of child care children to school is implemented according to board policy
- Enhance the working relationship between Howville child care centres and schools
- Be a resource to teaching and support staff for consultation and advice on child care matters
- Assess the need for child care within individual school communities
- Be a resource to local, municipal, provincial, community and other agencies with respect to child care in Howville schools
- Establish and maintain liaison with government and community agencies and investigate possible Federal, provincial and municipal funding sources for construction, renovation and/or start-up of child care centres in Howville schools
- Be a member of the Ontario Association for Child Care in Education
- Administer the board's policy on child care by recommending the selection of operators and participating in an annual child care program review in accordance with Board policy
- Develop strategies for sharing school space with child care centres and resolve problems
- Prepare reports as necessary
- Remain up-to-date on research, legislation and policy initiatives pertaining to child care
- Arrange or provide in-service training for teachers, principals, child care staff and the community
- Support the work of the board's Child Care Advisory Committee
- Attend relevant meetings
- Process correspondence related to child care
- Monitor board initiatives and report on any child care implications
- Assume other duties as required.

Figure 2

Selecting the Operator

School boards determine the process for selecting the child care agencies operating programs in their schools. Some boards have found it helpful to work with only one agency, which might operate programs in a number of schools. This clarifies and simplifies some of the tasks that need to be done. Other boards prefer individual parent boards. Still others favour promoting community input into the decision.

Whatever system is in place, it is important to encourage collaborative relationships. There should also be a policy for revisiting the decision after a fair review process.

Conditions of Occupancy

Some school boards use their role as landlord to require school-based child care centres to adhere to practices they consider important. Boards may for example require centres to:

- serve particular age groups or geographical communities
- abide by certain board guidelines (i.e., race relations and anti-bias curriculum)
- respect unique community requirements (i.e., to be francophone in a francophone school)
- participate in a regular program review process conducted by school board staff
- maintain appropriate levels of insurance.

Professional Development Initiatives

Communication between school and child care staff at the local level is complicated by the very practical problem that teachers are with children during the hours when child care staff are available to meet, and child care staff are with children when teachers are available to meet. For this reason a number of boards have created specific opportunities for staff to meet together and/or participate in joint professional development. The approach taken by three different boards is described in the profile opposite.

Conflict Management

School-child care relationships are built on ongoing communication. If there is disagreement about some aspect of the relationship, how will problems be resolved? One method developed in Halton and outlined in the board's **Operational Handbook for School-Based Child Care Co-ordination** involves a four-step resolution procedure. It starts with direct one-on-one communication between those involved and ultimately involves the chief administrative staff of the child care program and the board superintendent (with possible involvement from the Area Office of the Ministry of Community and Social Services).

Establishing a clear process such as this prevents problems from festering and protects everyone from arbitrary decisions.

Profile of Innovation

After reviewing its child care role in 1984, the **Hamilton Board of Education** supported the development of Umbrella Family and Child Care Centres and created a position of Child Care Program Leader to act as a liaison between the Umbrella board of directors, local schools and their resident child care centres.

Since 1989, the board's Child Care Program Leader, together with the Early Years Consultant, have collaborated to develop a series of in-service workshops for child care staff and kindergarten teachers on topics of mutual interest. At a local school level , monthly brown-bag lunches have kept lines of communication open and provided a forum for new initiatives.

The **North York Board of Education** has been mandating co-ordinated child care and education programs for four- and five-year-olds since its child care policy was passed in 1984. In 1988, pilot project funding from the Ontario Ministry of Education led to the development of The Rainbow Connection. With additional support from the federal government, The Rainbow Connection has blossomed into a range of initiatives involving teachers and child care staff in more than 60 North York schools.

Although no longer funded by other levels of government, The Rainbow Connection has succeeded in making collaboration a fact of life in many North York schools. A community development approach has encouraged liaison committees in individual schools to identify their own needs and develop local solutions that work. Some communities have discovered that by rearranging kindergarten and child care groupings, they can develop overlapping staffing models. In one family of schools, a partnership has developed with Adventure Place, a local social agency, to provide support for children enrolled in both school and child care programs. Shared professional development has led to joint planning, the development of a common observation tool and co-ordinated reporting to parents. In another neighbourhood, joint practicums have been arranged for York University education students.

Good ideas are contagious! The **Halton Board of Education** received a grant from the Learning Consortium for their Creative Connections project linking child care and kindergarten teachers in Halton with the Rainbow Connections project in North York. The purpose of this grant was to promote improvements in learning programs for children through collaborative teacher development.

Youth Leadership — Family Studies and Co-op Programs

When child care programs give high school students practical experience with young children, they become an important resource for secondary schools. By working in collaboration with child care agencies, family studies and physical education teachers can develop initiatives providing students with opportunities to develop:

- parenting skills
- coaching skills
- group leadership skills.

Often this happens through co-op placement experiences for students in family studies and life skills programs. However, because child care centres have budgets for hiring part-time and casual staff, board-wide youth leadership initiatives can provide a bridge for students into meaningful, paid employment. Such initiatives can incorporate:

- coaching and group leadership skills as part of the physical education curriculum during senior high school years
- child development units in family studies curriculum
- support for child care centres choosing to implement community sports programs or link up with existing community sports programs.

Communication Strategies

Many school boards have a communication strategy to ensure that the broader community is aware of the board's child care initiative. This typically includes:

- providing a sign for schools indicating that child care is available
- including references to child care in information about kindergarten registration
- developing a map or listing of all child care centres within the system.

Such communication should be consistent with the school board's public relations goals. Publicizing child care initiatives is also a useful way for boards to enhance their community profile. For example, articles can be submitted to local papers detailing how school-based child care:

- fosters quality care for children
- strengthens neighbourhoods
- supports families
- maximizes the use of publicly funded buildings and infrastructure
- contributes to community prosperity.

Figure 3

Howville Board of Education

* * * Child Care Update * * *

Memo
Date: January 15/94
From: Child Care Liaison Office
To: All centre supervisors and principals with school-based child care services
Re: Bi-annual School and Child Care Update

We are now preparing our bi-annual School and Child Care "Update." Your assistance in completing the form below will help us prepare Update as well as other reports for board administration, trustees and the community at large. This year's theme is "Healthy Children — Healthy Communities." For that reason we are requesting information that will help us demonstrate how our child care strategy is supporting children, families and community economic renewal.

As "Update" is a composite report about this board's support of child care services, individual schools will not be identified. Many thanks for your assistance.

Name of School _____ Name of Centre _____

a. What is the licensed capacity of your child care service?
b. How many families did you serve in 1993?
c. How many children currently are enrolled in the child care program in each of the following age groups?
Pre-JK ____ SK ____ Grades 1 - 3 ____ Grades 4 - 6 ____
d. How many children have you served over the course of the year including summer?
Pre-JK ____ SK ____ Grades 1 - 3 ____ Grades 4 - 6 ____

f. How many staff are employed?
____ more than 30 hours per week
____ 20 - 30 hours per week
____ fewer than 30 hours per week
____ summer only
g. Are any staff employed in both school and child care programs? Yes/No
If yes, how many? ____

h. Have you initiated any joint projects this year (i.e., school community events, professional development workshops, fundraising etc.)? Please describe them briefly.

Most boards routinely issue news releases to inform local media about school events and activities such as kindergarten registration, education week, beginning of the school year, etc. These news releases could serve the dual purpose of drawing attention to school-based child care initiatives.

In collaboration with local child care operators, school boards might also inform media of child care activity in schools during school breaks, P.D. days and summer holidays. These are all "good news" stories that contribute to a more positive attitude and better understanding within the community of the school-child care connection.

Once a school/child care policy is introduced, it is helpful to monitor progress. This demonstrates ongoing interest in and commitment to child care initiatives. Quantifying the success of the board's child care strategy is an important starting point for communication initiatives designed to strengthen support and understanding both within the system and the community at large. Figure 3 is a sample form suitable for gathering such data.

Looking Ahead: The School Board as Child Care Operator

In June 1993, the Ontario legislature approved an amendment to the Education Act allowing school boards to become operators of licensed child care services. This change was the result of many years of discussion and submissions from both child care and education organizations and numerous policy reports.

Proponents argue that encouraging school boards to operate licensed child care services will lead to:

- increased continuity for children
- improved communication and co-ordination because staff in both services report to one employer
- easier implementation of program models with integrated staffing, possibly operating out of one space, which are more efficient to operate than parallel models
- greater efficiency, which will allow better salaries and working conditions for child care staff
- a stronger school board role helping to broaden public perceptions of the role of child care services in communities
- greater authority for boards to make necessary changes.

Before boards begin to take advantage of this provision, they will want to know that such initiatives will not add to the property tax burden. Existing child care operators may also feel vulnerable and uncertain about the implications of such a move for their own programs. Accordingly, a pilot project approach, which ensures ongoing consultation and communication with stakeholders, is recommended.

1. Jeanne Jehl and Michael Kirst (1992). Beginning a Family Support Web Among Agencies and Schools. **The School Administrator**. Page 9.

The Mechanics: Operating Issues for School Boards and Child Care Managers

... the architect must empathize quite specifically with all those he serves: local preschooler, young student, parent, educator, other community members. He must carefully determine, for each component of the building and then collectively, what message needs to be expressed then how to deliver it with greatest clarity.[1]

- Julian Jakobs, 1992

School boards must bring the same sensitivity to designing the social and administrative environment of local schools as architects bring to designing the physical environment. Building and maintaining the school/child care connection will touch on many existing aspects of a board's operations and may require the development of new procedures and practices. Similarly, the attitudes and practices of many board officials can have a substantial effect on day-to-day life in school-based child care centres. This section describes various operational issues and suggests possible strategies for guiding the work of school and child care together.

Finance and Lease Issues

The effect of fiscal restraint on school budgets, combined with chronic underfunding of child care, makes budget issues one of the most contentious areas of a board's child care policy:

- will centres pay rent, and if so, how much?
- can centres access other board services such as plant, caretaking, secretarial, printing, purchasing, insurance, etc.? If yes, under what conditions?

School boards must make decisions about these issues and clearly communicate them to all child care operators. Trustees and senior administrators must understand the impact of their decisions on the work of centres and keep in mind the budget and decision-making timetables of the centres.

It is certainly reasonable that if the board incurs no additional costs, the child care operator would be charged no fee. Where additional costs are moderate and potential savings for child care centres are significant, a no-charge policy continues to be reasonable. Many boards feel it is an important principle to view "services in kind" as their contribution to the development of the child care system. This approach can have a major impact on child care budgets, allowing for lower parental fees and higher salaries.

A number of other non-financial administrative issues also impact on the landlord-tenant aspect of the school/child care relationship:

Tenure

While Ministry of Education policy mandates the construction of designated child care space in all new schools, formal security of tenancy is not guaranteed when surplus space in existing schools is being used for child care. It is up to boards to determine how long centres can expect to enjoy secure occupancy and how much notice must be given of changes. This will often place boards in an uncomfortable position of having to mediate between different community groups wanting access to space.

Many boards have found that frequent moves lower child care staff morale and undermine efforts to maintain a high-quality child-centred play environment. They also affect financial viability.

Growing out of their commitment to encourage the highest possible quality of care, these boards often choose to guarantee tenure for a set number of years and require principals to give 12 months' notice if space arrangements are to be changed. In addition, many boards give priority to school-based child care programs when allocating space for the summer months. Consequently, although the program may not get additional space during the summer, it is guaranteed its "home base."

Access

The hours and days a child care centre is open affects the workload of caretaking staff. Because programs must be able to offer parents predictable hours of service that are competitive with those of other child care settings, it is essential that these issues be clarified quickly:

- days when the centre must be closed
- hours when the centre may access the building
- procedures to access the building for special events, meetings, etc. in evenings and on weekends
- procedures for emergency school closures.

Figure 1

Howville Board of Education
Caretaking Guidelines — School-based Child Care

Table of Contents

Maintaining a Sanitary Environment

- duties of caretaking staff
- duties of child care staff
- communication and co-ordination
- what gets washed, dusted, swept, disinfected daily, weekly, monthly, annually
- emergency cleanings/sick children/floods, etc.
- procedures for planning major cleanings during school breaks
- garbage disposal, including recycling procedures, hazardous wastes
- pest control procedures
- pets in the child care program

Maintaining a Safe Environment

- approved products
- inspection of outdoor play areas/climbing equipment
- storage of hazardous materials
- maintenance and repair of equipment
- electrical equipment

Building Security

- procedures for locking doors (before and after centre closure)
- entrances and exits to be used by parents and staff
- outdoor lighting

Other Issues

- hiring of additional caretaking services
- reporting problems, concerns, etc.
- dealing with parents
- permits for special occasions, meetings, etc.
- late pickups
- non-school days
- painting, renovations and alterations to school space

Caretaking

The quality of caretaking is an important part of the school/child care connection. The child care centre should receive the same level of caretaking service as any other program in the school building. That service should be consistent for the duration of the lease.

Encouraging chief caretakers, principals and child care staff to meet two or three times a year helps to monitor and resolve any emerging problems or issues. These meetings should be held at the beginning of the school year and in advance of school breaks, when caretaking staff usually do full school cleaning.

The introduction of child care into a school can have a significant impact on how caretakers organize their work. Therefore, it is important to have written expectations and guidelines. Figure 1 is a list of areas covering most caretaking responsibilities.

Safety Guidelines

Monitoring safety preparedness is an ongoing concern of all adults responsible for children. The more people involved and the more transitions there are from one setting to another, the more likely it is that mistakes will be made. Safety requires co-ordination. The issue is further complicated because parents often do not differentiate between school and child care and may well take legal action against both in the event of an injury.

In addition to reducing the risk of injury to children, the development of written policies between school and child care may strengthen legal positions in the event of a lawsuit. Parent involvement in the process will provide a helpful gauge of community standards.

Many safety issues stem from local circumstances and conditions. For example, it might be appropriate for older children to be allowed to leave the school premises at lunch (with permission) in one community but not in another. It is useful for board policy to identify discretionary areas where policies can be developed at the local community level involving consultation with the child care operator and parents. The **Day Nurseries Act** requires child care centres to develop policies in many of these areas. The role of the school board is to encourage a co-ordinated approach to safety in local schools.

All school-based child care centres should be expected, as a condition of their lease, to develop written policies and procedures covering:

- emergency evacuation procedures
- safety procedures for transition times, i.e., arrival and departure times
- expectations for children's behaviour during active play periods
- monitoring of space and equipment for hazards
- reporting of child abuse
- security procedures for end of the day and school holidays
- overnight camping programs
- swimming programs
- field trip policies
- environmental health hazards
- "intermittent" supervision (under what circumstances can a child be out of the immediate view of staff?).

Transportation Policies

Transportation policies, an intricate affair for many boards, are further complicated by the addition of a child care dimension. Whether the board is providing bussing or whether it is working with the police in establishing a system of crossing guards, it is important that the child care needs of parents and children are taken into consideration.

It is now common practice in most Ontario communities for school boards to support children, parents and child care operators by providing transportation between schools and off-site child care. Once a workable plan is in place, it is important that provision is made for principals and child care operators to monitor children's school bus experience.

Encouraging the development of high-quality school-based child care centres may in fact somewhat reduce the need for bus services. This will be particularly true when the location of the programs and its hours of operation align conveniently with parents' commuting schedules and routes.

Strikes and Labour Disputes

Labour disputes, which are disruptive in any workplace, can be particularly painful in an active neighbourhood school. It is helpful if board policies covering strikes by both teachers and support staff are communicated to child care operators. School-based child care centres should also be encouraged to develop their own policies in the event a work stoppage affects their ability to operate.

Facility Design Procedures

As neighbourhood schools take on new roles, they require a new approach to facility design.

In establishing a design process, board administrators need to bring together a multi-disciplinary team of individuals who have wide experience with children in a variety of settings. While each individual's attention will be focused on only one aspect of the school, the team should begin its work as early as possible in the overall process. At issue is not just the design of a child care service but the design of a play environment for children that will also accommodate:

- children's play during class time and out-of-class time
- summer playground programs
- after-school recreation programs.

Given fiscal restraints, the objective must be to design space that can be successfully shared. The needs of children, parents, staff and administrators all need to be considered. A design team to advise the project architect could reasonably include:

- knowledgeable individuals from the child care community (even if the final operator is not yet determined)
- a classroom teacher
- the school principal
- an individual with experience providing recreation programming
- a parent
- M.C.S.S. licensing staff.

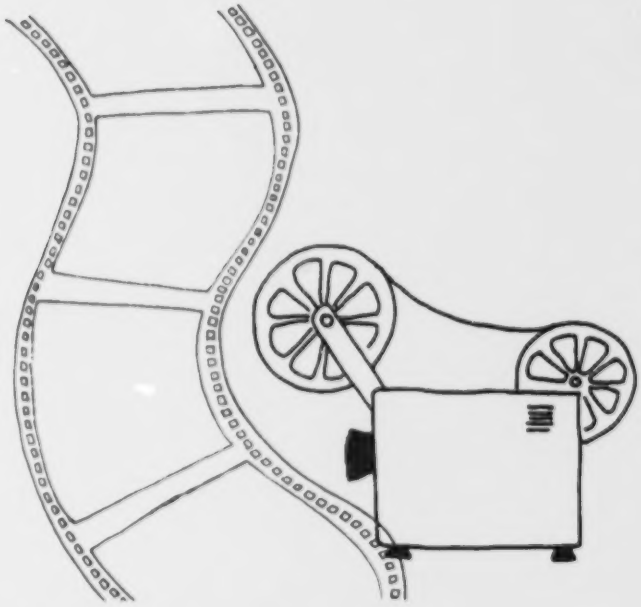
1. Julian Jakobs (1992). Living Architecture: A Dynamic New Future for the Public School. **Education Today** (4) 5. Page 9.

The School and Child Care Story

Out-of-school services to supervise, nurture or educate Ontario's kindergarten and school-age children have developed over the years in response to specific circumstances or perceptions of need. Group child care centres and school lunch programs evolved to provide care when parental supervision was unavailable. In the case of nursery schools for younger children, as well as music, heritage language and after-school "classes" for older children, an educational role is a more central educational role. Still others, such as recreation and nutrition supplement programs, have been designed primarily to promote children's health by providing exercise and nourishment.

Whether or not they are viewed as "child care," all of these programs have become part of the network of child care arrangements used by Ontario parents. They have also contributed to the idea of what formal child care services for school-age children could be. Operated variously by non-profit agencies, school boards and municipal recreation departments, the history of their development chronicles the evolving connection between school and child care.

Understanding this historical context brings current policy and program discussions into focus. In this section, the threads of the story are traced through photos and brief excerpts from documents, news accounts and commentary.



1880-1900: The Early Years

Child care was an important function of Ontario's emerging school system throughout the last half of the 19th century. While the 1871 Schools Act made schooling compulsory for children aged seven to 12 for four months of the year, schools in some boards were open six days a week and 11 months of the year. When the Toronto School Board, in 1869, faced a shortage of space, it considered operating a half-day program for children in the first grade. Trustees faced immediate protest from mothers who wanted their children at school the whole day. According to an account written in 1950:

The mothers made it plain that they wanted "the kids" out of the way for the whole day. Some even added — that they care not what they learn if only they are kept off the street.[1]

TBE Archives

Teaching and caregiving at Elizabeth Street Public School

Early kindergarten at Toronto Normal School (Teacher's College)

In 1883, concerns about preschool-age children being left unsupervised were brought to the Toronto School Board by its chief inspector, James L. Hughes. After hearing that the program would be of particular benefit to "poor working women," trustees voted to establish Canada's first public kindergarten program. As the program became established in middle-class communities, public support for the initiative grew. In 1887, Ontario became the first jurisdiction in the world to officially recognize kindergarten as part of the elementary school system.[2]

Four years later, the Toronto School Board was also instrumental in establishing Ontario's first day care centre when Hester How, a grade four teacher at Elizabeth Street Public School, became concerned about the number of older girls staying home from school to care for younger siblings. Initially, How allowed her students to bring their siblings to class. When this approach became unmanageable, she and Hughes approached trustees for financial support to establish the Victoria Creche.[3] Like others to follow, the creche served both school-age and preschool-age children.

Unlike kindergartens, creches emphasized custodial care rather than education. For school-age children, the program constituted a hot meal at lunchtime and loose supervision after school — perhaps by the maid. Depending on fundraising (often assisted by local schools) and small amounts of government support, creches struggled from year to year to maintain themselves. In addition, they often operated as employment agencies for the mothers of the children who were enrolled.[4]

Noon meal at East End Creche

"You can have one too." The Toronto Playground Association promoted its work by operating a "model playground" at the C.N.E.

1900-1920: The Turn of the Century

During the first two decades of the new century, the few creches established in Toronto and Ottawa continued to operate. But even though women's workplace participation rates increased during the period, child care did not become a significant issue for policymakers. Prevailing attitudes are indicated by the continuing discussion about the role of kindergartens.

In 1906, John Harold Putman, the chief inspector of schools for the Ottawa School Board, proposed that full-day kindergarten programs be implemented in areas where:

> *children had little opportunity for play at home and where the mother's household cares make it difficult for her to give her children proper guidance.*[5]

In contrast, Ada Marean Hughes, Toronto's director of kindergartens, warned that full-day kindergartens would:

> *... transform the kindergarten into an institution which substituted for the family, rather than one which supported and complemented it.*[6]

For both Putman and Hughes, the primary value of kindergartens was the educational benefit children derived from participating in organized play programs.

This belief in the educational value of play was quickly extended to older children. Across the country, local chapters of the National Council of Women took

up the cause of children's playgrounds. In Ontario, legislation passed in 1903 allowed municipalities to purchase land for public parks.

Simply providing space to play was rapidly perceived to be insufficient. In Toronto, reformers such as James L. Hughes, A.M. Heustis from the Toronto Council of Women and J.J. Kelso, a provincial civil servant with responsibility for children's aid societies, organized the Toronto Playground Association to advocate for supervised playgrounds. They argued that:

Play is for young children an absolute necessity. It is quite impossible for them to grow up physically strong and active unless they have abundant opportunities to exercise their bodies and limbs. It is just as impossible for them grow up morally robust and capable of habitual self-control if they are not allowed constant opportunities to play with other children."

AO ACC 16305 S12230

Organizing children's play

MTRL T11850

Staff from East End Creche supervise community playground

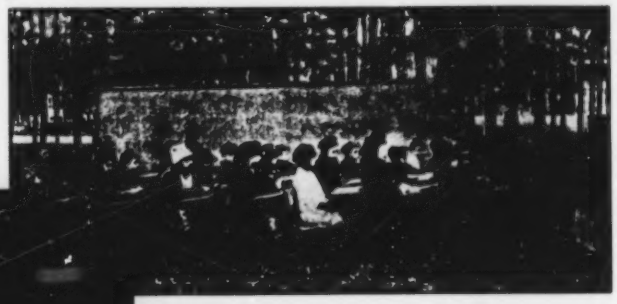
To Hughes, playgrounds were a natural "extension of kindergartens."[8] At his recommendation, the Toronto School Board gradually established programs in 18 of its schools, often hiring teachers as supervisors. The city's Parks Department assumed responsibility for the programs in municipal parks.

Playgrounds were far from being only a Toronto issue. Between 1906 and 1908, playground associations were established in Hamilton, London, Ottawa and other centres. Advocates worked tirelessly to raise the profile of their cause through public meetings, newspaper columns and pamphlets.

Unlike the creches, it was argued that playgrounds were needed "within reach of every child."[9] Significantly, public funding grew steadily throughout the first 20 years of the century, just as it had for kindergartens 20 years earlier. In Toronto, connections were established with the city's three creches when the city provided funds for them to operate playground programs for the community. Aside from these links, playgrounds, like kindergartens, were not considered child care.

Parallel to, and closely connected with, the development of playgrounds was a growing awareness of public health issues. As children's health became a concern of school boards during the second decade of the new century, school nurses were hired and other health initiatives undertaken.

By 1910, the Ottawa and Toronto public boards established "forest schools" to maximize the time "sickly" children spent out of doors. The forest schools operated from May through the summer vacation until November. The program promoted good health habits and physical activity with traditional large group instruction techniques. In addition to blackboard instruction,



CTA RG8 32 803

The High Park Forest School

CTA DPW 11 55

children "enjoyed" a daily rest period, marching, nose-blowing drills and baseball.

Some boards, particularly rural ones, were finding new roles as well as new curriculum. By 1918, the Wentworth, Peel and Halton boards were leading the province in the development of hot-meal programs for the many children who stayed at school over the lunch hour. The traditional emphasis on the 3Rs was broadening by

the end of this period in other ways as well. The curriculum in many boards began to include such subjects as domestic science and industrial training.

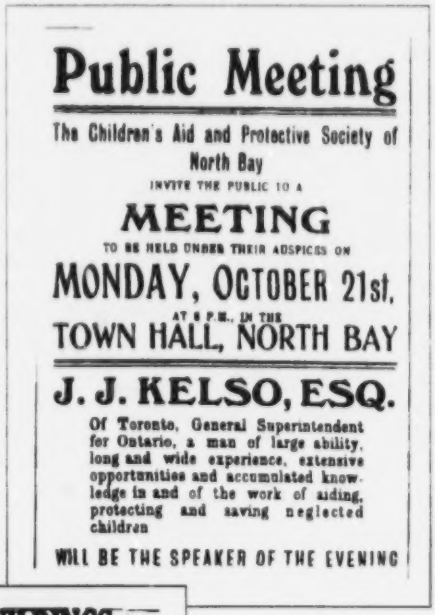
New approaches to learning in schools were paralleled by new opportunities for learning in out-of-school settings. Between 1910 and 1915, a wide range of community programs became well established, sometimes independent of schools but often in close partnership. For older children and youth, Scouts, Guides and church-based groups such as Canadian Girls in Training became fixtures in many communities. Ontario's first 4-H Club was founded in Waterloo County in 1919.[10]

In Toronto, the Board of Education, the Playground Association and three downtown settlement houses worked collaboratively to establish evening play centre programs in three inner-city schools. A club format was organized to deliver a wide range of recreation activities for children aged seven to 15. In addition to providing opportunities for skill development, clubs were seen as a vehicle for introducing children to democratic decision- making.[11]

CTA - SC 24-68

CTA - SC 24-77

The Young Mothers Club and Drama Club at school-based evening play centres



Public Meeting

The Children's Aid and Protective Society of North Bay

INVITE THE PUBLIC TO A

MEETING

TO BE HELD UNDER THEIR ADSPICES ON

MONDAY, OCTOBER 21st,

AT 8 P.M., IN THE

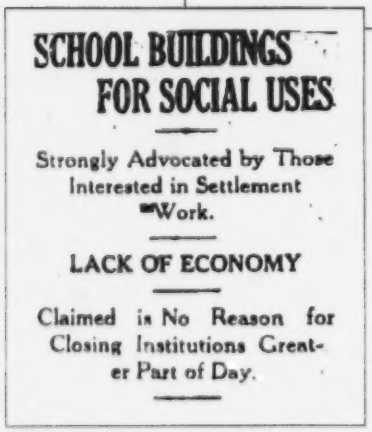
TOWN HALL, NORTH BAY

J. J. KELSO, ESQ.

Of Toronto, General Superintendent for Ontario, a man of large ability, long and wide experience, extensive opportunities and accumulated knowledge in and of the work of aiding, protecting and saving neglected children

WILL BE THE SPEAKER OF THE EVENING

Toronto Globe and Mail, circa 1916



SCHOOL BUILDINGS FOR SOCIAL USES

Strongly Advocated by Those Interested in Settlement Work.

LACK OF ECONOMY

Claimed is No Reason for Closing Institutions Greater Part of Day.

The 1920s and 1930s

If previous decades were marked by a growing public belief in the importance of play in the lives of children, the 1920s and 1930s brought a strengthening of institutional boundaries between organizations, government bodies and the new professional groups that were emerging to staff programs.

Concerns about spiraling education costs in some areas fanned conflict between school boards and municipal councils. Conflict intensified when the extension of free schooling up to the age of 16 increased pressure on local taxpayers. In Toronto, the battles had already begun by 1918, when the health initiatives of the school board came under attack from the municipality. After a bitter referendum campaign, the board was forced to transfer its health inspection department and one of the forest schools to the public health department. Playground programs would follow over time.

In 1925, the establishment of the Institute of Child Studies at the University of Toronto turned academic attention to younger children — aged two to five. Under the direction of Dr. William Blatz, the institute quickly assumed an active and controversial role in shaping attitudes towards the raising and educating of young children. The Institute was organized into four divisions: research, training, parent education and the St. George Nursery School. The nursery school provided a setting for research and allowed Institute faculty to demonstrate the effectiveness of their radical new ideas about child development (see page 31).

Parallel to the development of Early Childhood Education as a discipline was the growing prominence of gender-segregated youth work (known as Boys Work and Girls Work). Conducted

Political cartoon about educational costs, circa 1921

by churches, settlement houses, Ys and municipal recreation departments, these programs were shaped by emerging theories of adolescence and growing fears of juvenile delinquency.

By focusing on youths aged 12 to 20, Ontario's nascent recreation movement assumed a professional identity clearly distinct from that established by the playground movement of the previous decade. For the core of full-time staff who worked with children and organized volunteers, the focus on older children placed them on par with (mainly male) high-school teachers. According to some interpretations, this put them a step above less well paid, and predominantly female, elementary school teachers.[12] Not surprisingly, age segregation efforts were not always successful as younger children, kept arriving with older siblings.

Creche programs for school-age children, like those for younger children, continued to operate in Toronto and Ottawa during this period. As creches were increasingly influenced by the new theories at the Institute of Child Studies, some of the new professionalism appears in the programs for school-age children. In 1934, the West End Creche commends the staff person in the school-age group:

... Miss Beatrice Mace for her work in assisting the children through their transition period from our programme to the methods used under the Public School system.[13]

Such efforts to improve programs for school-age children were the result of individual initiatives rather than any government effort. Although child care programs for school-age children may have blurred the edges, there was little systematic effort to build bridges between the emerging service streams. Indeed, by the end of the period, the boundaries of municipal recreation programs, schools and creches were well established.

The process of building bridges did not truly begin until 1939, when the Institute of Child Studies commenced offering courses to kindergarten teachers. With this step, the foundations for a conceptual link between the school system and other early childhood education services such as nursery schools and creches was established.

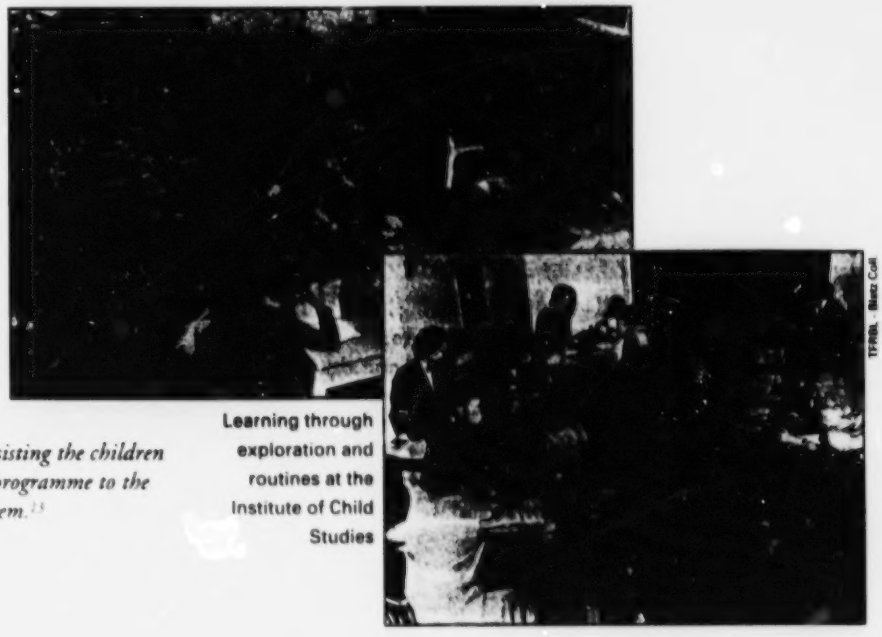
The 1940s and 1950s

World War II introduced a dramatic, albeit temporary, shift in the school/child care story. As more men were sent overseas to fight and factories increased production, women became essential to the war effort. Concerns about child care quickly emerged. While child care was needed for children of all ages, it was most pronounced for those of kindergarten and school age.

In 1942, Dr. Blatz and a team of experts from the Institute of Child Studies were sent to England to guide the establishment of Britain's day nurseries program. Commented the British minister of labour, Ernest Bevin:

I do not suppose anyone in this country before the war thought that a nursery school would be an essential part of our defence program.[14]

Back in Ontario, federal funding resulted in the establishment of 28 day nurseries for preschoolers and 42 day care centres for school-age children in Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton and Windsor.[15] Programs for older children were



Learning through exploration and routines at the Institute of Child Studies

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Wartime Feeding Station

most frequently located in school buildings "to encourage continuity between school and day care programs."[16] In some instances programs were staffed by classroom teachers. "Feeding Stations" would be an important component of the wartime program, offering a noon meal to children often under the supervision of community volunteers.

Montreal Gazette, June 3, 1942

School Age Children a Problem Where Mothers Are at War Work

Necessity of Guiding Hand for Untrained Mind in Formative Years Stirs Quandary Among Advocates of Day Nursery System

Although neither child care services nor the needs of school-age children had been anything but a peripheral part of the research agenda of Blatz and his colleagues, the Institute of Child Studies quickly became involved in establishing regulations and training programs for staff and volunteers. While there were separate regulations for older children, training seems to have been focused entirely on the day nurseries. Both parents and school principals complained about the poor-quality care being offered to kindergarten and school-age children.

The withdrawal of federal government funding in 1946 caused all 42 school-age programs in the province to close. Although protests appear to have been confined to Toronto, the well-organized advocacy by the Day Care and Day Nurseries Parents Association kept local papers filled with stories of the "day care crisis." The provincial government rejected repeated appeals for funding. William Goodfellow, the provincial welfare minister, argued:

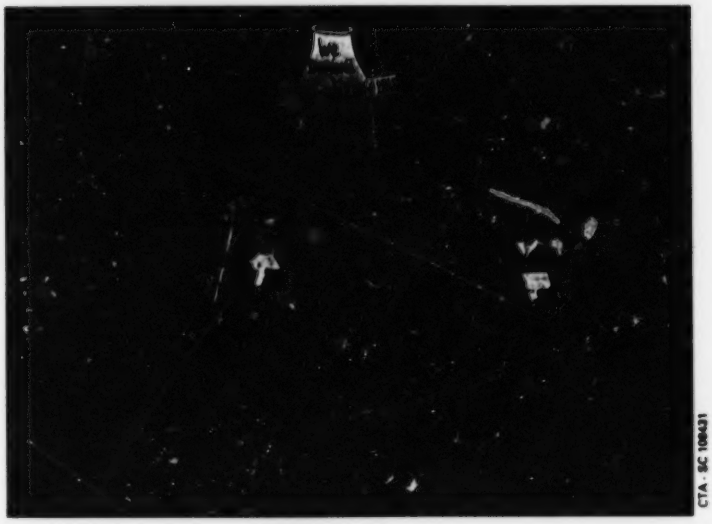
I believe in the family unit. I don't want to be responsible for any program that is going to break up the family unit.[17]

The wartime day care issue was part of a much broader public debate about the post-war reconstruction of Canadian society. It was often the same women protesting the high cost of milk who also lobbied for school nutrition programs, after-school recreation — and day care.

In response to the growing prominence of the day care issue, the provincial legislature passed the Day Nurseries Act, which set minimum program standards and established a provincial-municipal cost-sharing arrangement. Higher standards drove the cost of the service up and also resulted in the closure of programs. No provision was made for school-age children.

As a program operator, the Toronto Board of Education was also pressured to respond to the closure of the wartime day care centres. The board cast about looking for solutions. At one point, consideration was given to maintaining meal programs but cancelling the recreational activities after school.[18] At another point, C.C. Goldring, the board's director of education, suggested that the need for such programs would be considerably lessened:

if women teachers could be encouraged to provide after school activities like the men teachers do.[19]



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Post-war milk protest

Finally the board chose to focus its energies on the four- and five-year-old age group by establishing junior kindergarten and full-day senior kindergarten programs.

By 1950 the commissioner of welfare for the City of Toronto is quoted in the Toronto Star as saying that the city was "playing a losing game in locating nurseries in city schools."[20] It would be more than 25 years before this would change.

Local and provincial politicians reached a consensus by the early 1950s that child care for school-age children was not a significant issue. Still, organized play programs continued to be supported by municipal councils under the aegis of recreation departments and community agencies. These programs for children and teenagers frequently took place in school buildings.

The issue of child care for school-age children never completely disappeared. Workplace participation rates of women did not go down as expected after the war but continued to climb steadily. Day camp programs proliferated in communities such as Toronto, starting in 1950. Together, these various services undoubtedly met some of the needs of working parents for out-of-school care. In communities where school-age children roamed freely, the need for closer supervision was not apparent to most.

Despite the closure of the wartime centres, child care services for younger children continued to expand slowly — particularly half-day nursery programs sponsored by parent groups and modeled on the St. George Nursery School at the Institute for Child Studies.[21] In the absence of government financial support, a new type of child care centre began to appear on the scene during this period — small commercial enterprises. Private individuals, unlike non-profit agencies, were able to borrow from banks and pay off their loans over the ensuing years. Supported by the new Nursery Education Association (which became the Association of Early Childhood Educators in Ontario), staff in both these settings began to acquire a stronger professional identity.

Starting Over: 1960-1980

The absence of a comprehensive provincial vision for children, families and communities resulted in a series of sometimes complementary and sometimes contradictory initiatives throughout the 1960s and 1970s.

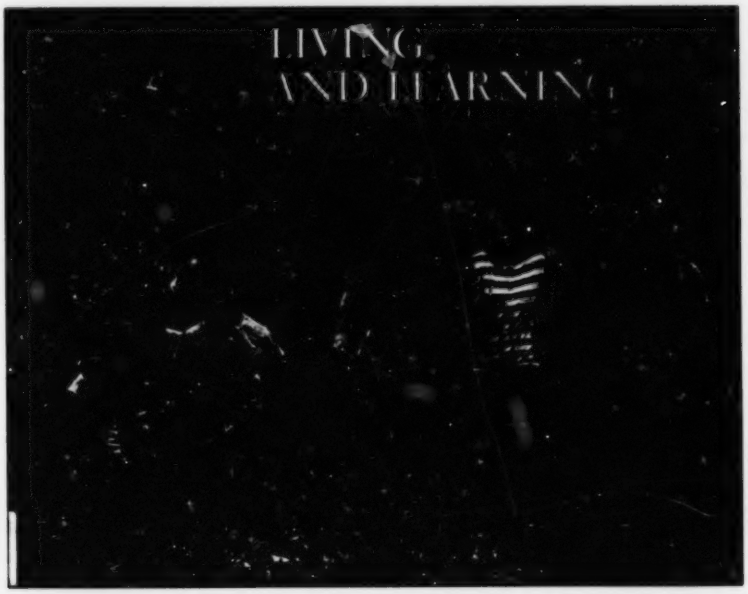
Although Dr. Blatz retired in 1960, his influence on the lives of Ontario children was to be enduring. By 1967-68, Ontario's community college system was beginning to be established. In the coming years, all 22 colleges would establish Early Childhood Education programs. Institute of Child Studies graduates would be prominent leaders in the training of a new generation of child care staff.

With the 1968 release of the **Hall Dennis Report, Living & Learning,** Ontario's school system entered a period of dramatic reform. New stress was placed on adapting programs to individual needs and on encouraging the development of self-confidence. The school system, which had left child care services behind at the end of the war, was refashioning itself in the child-centred vision that had been pioneered by the child studies movement.

According to Kyle, the need to expand child care services for working parents finally began to be recognized in the mid-1960s. By 1973, more than one-third of mothers of preschoolers were working outside the home. In comparison, more than 50 per cent of the mothers of school-age children were employed outside the home.[22]

Not surprisingly then, the **Day Nurseries Act** was amended in 1966 to allow school-age children to participate in licensed group child care. In the same year, the federal government introduced the **Canada Assistance Plan**, through which it began to share the cost of day care services for needy families. The infusion of federal dollars together with the regulatory changes was all the impetus necessary to support service expansion — which occurred in a largely random and ad hoc fashion.

While child care services for school-age children were finally beginning to develop, the Children's Services Division of the Ministry of Community and Social Services was reorganized in 1978 on a decentralized model that left significant discretion to



Hall Dennis Report, 1968

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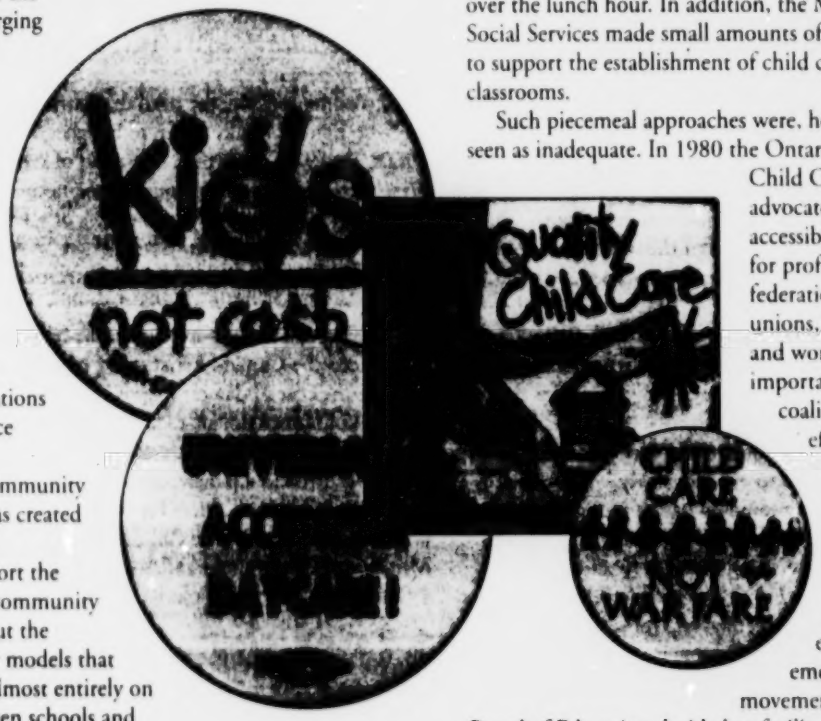
local area offices of the ministry. Reorganization came on the heels of a 1976 decision to disband the Advisory Council on Day Care before the council was able to complete the work it had planned — including a review of school-aged care.[23] Failure to complete this planning exercise left undecided the place of services for school-age children within the child care system.

In some parts of the province, the emerging system of licensed family home day care agencies was seen as the most affordable and flexible route to follow. In areas where group programs were springing up, local discretion resulted in widely differing interpretations of staffing and space requirements.



In 1974 the Community Schools Section was created in the Ministry of Education to support the development of "community schools" throughout the province. The new models that emerged focused almost entirely on partnerships between schools and municipal recreation departments.

Although child care did not figure prominently in ministry documents of the period, the combination of increased openness to community use of school buildings, together with declining enrollment, led to grass-roots pressure in many communities to develop school-based child care.

This period ends in 1979 with the release by Ontario's teacher's federations of a ground-breaking report entitled "To Herald a Child." This report recommended the establishment of a new Ministry of the Young Child to oversee a system of Centres for the Family and the Education of the Young, which were envisioned as providing care, education and recreation services for children from birth to the age of eight.

The 1980s: The Day Care Decade

The 1980s were characterized by dramatic changes in public perceptions of child care and subsequent expansion of services. Schools were to play a critical role in these events. Beginning in 1980, boards were instructed by the minister of education, Bette Stephenson, to make provisions for children to be supervised over the lunch hour. In addition, the Ministry of Community Social Services made small amounts of capital funding available to support the establishment of child care programs in vacant classrooms.

Such piecemeal approaches were, however, beginning to be seen as inadequate. In 1980 the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care was formed to advocate for "universally accessible, publicly funded, not for profit child care." Teachers' federations, together with labour unions, child care organizations and women's groups, played an important role in the work of the coalition by supporting its efforts to become an effective advocate for child care in general and for a school-based child care strategy in particular.

School boards were early partners with the emerging child care movement. In 1982, the Toronto Board of Education decided to facilitate the development of parent-operated centres in vacant classroom space. A small start-up grant was authorized along with ongoing consultative support. The importance of co-ordination between school and child care programs was flagged. In the ensuing months and years, school boards in Ottawa, York, North York and elsewhere passed policies to support the development of child care services. In Ottawa, the school board was allowed for a number of years to hold the licence of school-based programs.

In 1985, Ontario voters elected a new government. In a historic accord, the Liberal Party, together with the New Democratic Party, identified child care as a priority issue. The Liberal government followed up in 1987 with the announcement of a dramatic shift in government policy, signaled by the release of the **New Directions in Child Care**. For the first time since World War II, child care was seen as an "essential community service." The requirement that all new schools be built with a child care centre dramatically raised the profile of child care among school boards.

The school/child care connection has b[illegible] long time evolving. But the idea of such a link has p[illegible] remarkably resilient.

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Figure 1

Howville Community Programs

Howville Community Programs, in partnership with the Howville Board of Education, offers a range of care, recreation and educational enrichment services to help parents meet their child care needs and provide children with safe, stimulating play opportunities.

Community programs at Howville Elementary School:

- serve children from 3 3/4 to 12 years
- provide comprehensive year-round service
- ensure close co-ordination between school and child care
- provide flexible enrollment options designed to meet a wide range of family and child needs
- offer reasonable fees, with subsidized care available for eligible families.

"Wrap-around" Child Care for Kindergarten-age Children

Howville Community Programs offers your 4- to 5 -year-old child a quality early childhood environment with fully trained staff to complement his or her kindergarten experience. The program opens at 7 a.m. and closes at 6 p.m. on all regular school days in addition to school breaks and summer holidays. Some part-week enrollment is available.

Comprehensive "Wrap-around" Child Care for Older Children

For children in Grades 1 to 6 H.C.P. provides a wide range of out-of- school play opportunities with flexible access designed to accommodate a range of child and parent needs. Register only for those program components that you need.

Licensed Before- and After-school Care
7:30-9 a.m. and 3:35-6 p.m.

A safe and challenging play environment is provided for children both before and after school. Fee includes cost of a nutritious snack. Register for one or both programs on a full- or part-week basis.

Lunch Supervision

Lunch hour supervision is available at no cost to all children attending Howville Elementary School. Participants eat lunch in the gym under the supervision of a teacher or paraprofessional. Although there is no fee, children must be registered with Howville Community Programs and all necessary documentation completed.

In order to provide continuity for children participating in after-school programs, the cost of additional supervision at lunchtime is built into your after-school program fee.

Nutrition Supplements

Hot food, milk and juice are available for moderate cost at the Lunch Meal Counter. Menus are posted monthly. Children must pre-register for the meal plan on either a full-week or part-week basis. The first Friday of the month is always Pizza Day.

"After-four" Clubs 3:35-5 p.m.

Gymnastics Club, Soccer Club, Chefs of the World, Computer Club. Organized for children in Grades 3 to 6, the After-four Program provides opportunities for children to develop and pursue recreational interests under the supervision of a skilled adult. Clubs operate for seven week terms. Due to space restrictions, children in Grades 3 and 4 are limited to one club program per week. New program offerings are announced each semester.

Financial support of the Howville Recreation Department is gratefully acknowledged.

Licensed Full-day Programs
7:30 a.m.- 6 p.m.

Your child will enjoy these 19 full days of uninterrupted play throughout the school year (P.D. days, March break and December break). Individual P.D. day registration may be available.

Scouting and Guiding at Howville Community Programs — Thursday and Friday (7 p.m.-8:30 p.m.)

Thursday and Friday evenings are for Beavers, Cubs and Brownies. Parents may register their child for the program of their choice plus a special "Care Link," which provides an evening meal for children participating in after-school care on those days. The program is co-ordinated and operated by a committee of parent volunteers and Howville Community Program staff.

Licensed Family Home Child Care

Howville Community Programs also offers year-round licensed family home care for children from infancy through 12 years. Arrangements are made for school-age children to participate in "After-four clubs" and for part of the group care program on full days. During the summer months, school-age children enrolled in Family Home Care also participate in the Play Yard Program, returning to their caregiver at the end of the day.

Summer at Howville

Summer Play Yard
9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

The creative arts play yard is our core program during summer months. Designed to appeal to the builder, artist, adventurer and performer in your child, the Yard offers a rich environment to play and be with friends. Thanks to the support of the Howville Recreation Department, limited numbers of children may register for half-day periods at no charge. When space permits, there is also provision for "drop-in" attendance for "kids on their bikes." Parents with young children and family home care providers are also encouraged to drop by.

Extended Hours Program
7:30 a.m.- 9:30 a.m.
and 3:30 p.m.-6 p.m.

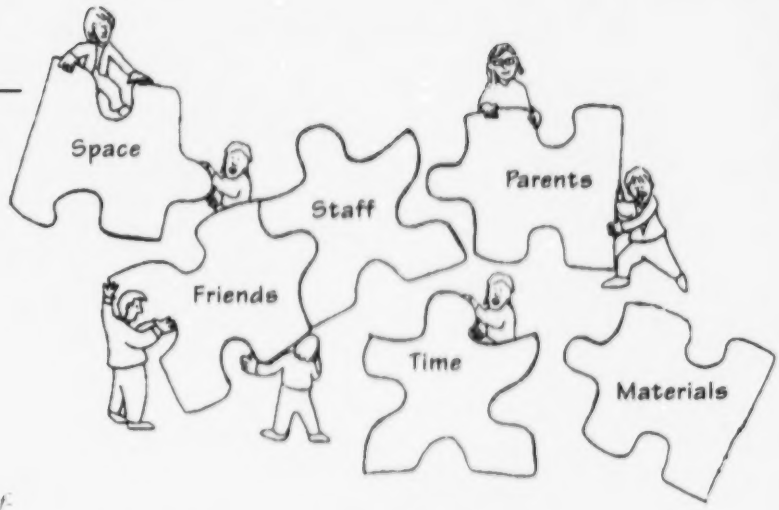
The Extended Hours Program is designed for children and parents who require extended program hours during the summer months. The program is an integrated extension of the Summer Play Yard. Register your child for one or more weeks.

Space is limited, so register early!

Parent Volunteers. *Do you have a program skill you would like to share? Ask how you can earn program credit hours for your child in any Howville Community Program by becoming a volunteer program leader.*

SECTION SEVEN

Providing for Play



What is needed is a different paradigm for teaching in out-of-school settings ... An alternative model I think would be more useful and appropriate would be a combination architect/designer and leader of a jazz band. A program leader must first design a physical environment that is varied but understandable and choose a set of materials and games that is evocative and enjoyable, but manageable. When the children play with these materials, the program leader modulates their involvement as their interest rises or falls, balancing individual improvisation with group dynamics. The leader allows plenty of room for emotional expression but sees that it is done with some development of skill.[1]

– Bernie Zubrowski

Ontario school children spend significant amounts of time in the care arrangements described in the sample brochure in Figure 1. Many children spend more waking hours in school and child care combined than they do at home. For these children, school must be an environment for both learning and playing.

Play is a complex social, intellectual and emotional phenomenon. If growing up is learning to be a responsible member of a community, then it is through play that children first practise responsibility. In play, children initiate and create both ideas and relationships. They learn to be autonomous — to have ideas and to act on them. They develop confidence in their capacity to solve a wide range of problems. In concert with friends, they create the rituals and traditions that cement their sense of community.

For children to assume responsibility for their play, adults must provide an environment:

- with space appropriate to a variety of play types and social groupings to which children attach feelings of both ownership and pleasure
- with materials that support a wide range of creative, dramatic and other activities
- with time schedules that allow children to become immersed in activities and projects that can evolve over a period of hours or even days
- that can be shared with a community of self-selected friends
- that is supervised by talented and caring adults who can ensure continuity of care through the entire day and who both support and challenge children as their play ideas develop.

While much has been written about organizing both classroom and child care environments to provide opportunities for complex play, little attention has been paid to the way school and child care interact to shape children's play lives. In this section we will look at the myriad of decisions made by educators, child care staff and parents that provide parameters and sometimes barriers for children's play during out-of-school hours. Strategies will be presented for optimizing play opportunities in neighbourhood schools and child care settings.

It is helpful to consider the possible interrelationship of all out-of-the classroom programs:

Care Programs
- licensed child care
- lunch supervision
- nutrition programs

Recreation/Enrichment Programs
- school-sponsored After-four activities
- community sports and arts programs
- heritage language programs

Outdoor Play Opportunities
- lunchtime and after school
- summer playground programs

1. Bernie Zubrowski (1981). **Day Care and Early Education**, Fall. Page 18.

Space to Play

Space is the most useful starting point when designing a new child care service or reviewing an established one. Space determines both the number of children who can be enrolled at one time and how the program is organized.

Schools wanting to introduce a licensed child care service must be able to meet the requirements of the Day Nurseries Act. These include:

- 2.8 square metres of unencumbered playroom space per child
- windows equal to 10 per cent of the floor area
- access to washrooms
- 5.2 square metres of playground space per child.

These are minimum standards considered necessary to accommodate the needs of children who may be in the setting for substantial numbers of hours.

A home base

Each school-age child attending the child care service on a full-time basis should have a Home Base during out-of-school hours, where they can arrange some of the furnishings and decorate according to their particular tastes. This space should be available during all program periods, including before school, after school and during school breaks.

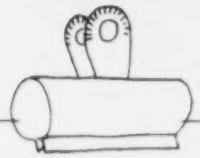
A home base is a good space to play if children have opportunity:

- to be active
- to play with a few friends
- for creative and dramatic play
- for academic pursuits
- to be alone
- to be quiet
- to be part of a larger group
- for constructive play
- to be comfortable
- for messy play.

To accommodate additional numbers of children, it should be possible to license additional space in the school if a written agreement is provided by the school principal identifying what space is available and when. For example, the Home Base room may be licensed for a group of 15 children, but additional children enrolled in specific programs could be accommodated if additional space suitable for the program was offered.

With this type of program model, the gym might be available Mondays and Fridays for a sports program, the staff room may be provided on Thursdays for a cooking club and a classroom may be provided on Tuesdays for a drama club.

Figure 2



Sharing Space: A Checklist for Success

Shared use of program space can be successful in school-age child care programs if attention is paid to the needs of both the adults and children. Communities should ensure that:

- ✔ The child care program has exclusive use of the space during out-of-school hours
- ✔ Children are able to decorate part of the Home Base and organize some furniture according to their particular tastes
- ✔ There is sufficient storage space for program materials and children's work in progress. It should not be necessary for any users of the area to be tripping over furniture and materials that hamper their ability to use the space successfully
- ✔ When furniture is purchased, thought is given to how it can make shared space easier (i.e., wheels and casters, sturdy, light design)
- ✔ Possible furniture arrangements are negotiated with a view to meeting the needs of all users
- ✔ There is a designated place for messy play activities
- ✔ Activity choices are broadened through the use of project boxes
- ✔ Child care staff are able to access room for at least 20 minutes prior to program start
- ✔ Provision is made for all users to meet together to discuss the arrangement
- ✔ Clean-up expectations are sorted out and procedures for equipment are established
- ✔ Agreements are made in advance about how broken equipment will be replaced
- ✔ Principal and child care supervisor actively monitor the arrangement.

Sharing space

While most communities find that exclusive use of space is optimal, shared space can be managed effectively. The development of child care services in Ontario's rapidly growing suburban communities often relies on the good will and resourcefulness of administrators, who must integrate child care programs into already crowded school buildings.

The difficulties of shared space should not be underestimated. When more people — both children and adults — use an area, it wears out more quickly. It is discouraging for teachers who have purchased classroom materials out of their own pocket to find

materials missing or broken. The seven-year-old who is expected to not touch anything after school will quickly develop negative feelings and attitudes to his or her care arrangement. The child care staff who always feel like an unwelcome guest will find it harder to do his or her job effectively. For shared space to work, the needs of all must be carefully considered (see Figure 2).

Outdoor play space

The capacity of individual school playgrounds to accommodate a diverse and changing range of play activities varies widely across Ontario. Playgrounds designed to accommodate large numbers of children for short periods of time at recess and lunch may not meet the play needs of children who use the space for longer periods after school and on school breaks. Factors as diverse as playground size, the number of children in the community and the amount and type of vegetation are important variables. Other factors such as maintenance, security and funding impose limits on what is immediately possible.

Fortunately, many communities have found ways to make improvements over time. School-based child care is often one component of such efforts. Start-up funding for new programs can be used to make small contributions to existing playground structures. More significantly, the presence of trained staff during out-of-school periods can extend and broaden the scope of outdoor play through the introduction of materials and equipment that need adult supervision.

Figure 3

Three Children

Katrina is a bright and outgoing- seven- year old. She gets up at 6:45 a.m. and is out of the house by 8. She joins a combined group of four- to seven year-olds before school in her school-based child care centre (eight- 10-year-olds are in another room). The program is staffed by a part-time staff. At 9 Katrina's school day begins and she proceeds to her classroom with 21 other children.

At noon, Katrina attends the lunch program in the school gym. This program is used by more than 90 children and is staffed by two community residents. After lunch, Katrina returns to class until the end of the day, when she comes down to the after-school child care group. Of the 15 children in this group, only two are in her classroom. When her best friend stopped attending the after-school program, Katrina lobbied hard to drop out as well. "There's no one to play with," she complained. Now it is complicated to play with her friend after school as it requires planning at least a day in advance. If the two girls come up with a plan at lunchtime or afternoon recess, it is too late to get all of the necessary written permission forms signed.

Because Katrina's child care centre is closed during the summer, her mother will enroll her at a local day camp for three weeks. Katrina is bussed from a central pick-up point for about one hour to the local conservation area, where the program operates. At camp, Katrina is in a group of 15 children with two teenage counsellors. The other children and the staff are drawn from throughout the city where Katrina lives. Consequently, there is no one in Katrina's group who is in either Katrina's class or her child care group. The camp runs from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., but fortunately a before- and after-camp program is provided at the pick-up point with additional staff.

Over the course of the year, Katrina shares a group experience with more than 70 children. None of her peers shares membership in more than two of these groups. She interacts with dozens of adults.

Jeremy is an active seven-year-old boy. Jeremy's mother works in the same office as Katrina's mom and the two children have similar schedules. However, Jeremy is enrolled in a licensed home child care arrangement because his mother wanted him to be in the same care arrangement as his three-year-old sister. He is also an out-of-district student because there was no child care in his neighbourhood school and his mother was unable to find a home care provider willing to take a school-age child.

Like Katrina, Jeremy also participates in the school lunch program. After school his care provider is waiting at the school gate to escort him home. Jeremy finds this embarrassing, but both the provider and his mother are worried about the busy traffic on the street where the school is located. Once he arrives at his care provider's home, Jeremy watches TV until he is picked up because the other children in the house are much younger . On P.D. days and school breaks, he is getting increasingly restless and is telling his mother he doesn't want to go to the "sitter's."

Jeremy's experience is as isolating as Katrina's — but in a different way.

Jason is an active eight-year-old who, like Jeremy and Katrina, participates in the school lunch program. Before and after school he is at home alone with his 10-year-old brother, Sam. With the exception of P.D. days and school breaks, the arrangement seems to work reasonably well most of the time. However, Sam often resents having to look out for his kid brother. On several occasions he ran ahead, let himself into the house and then refused to open the door for Jason (he did, however, feed Jason his snack through the mail slot). Such incidents occur with some regularity. Like Jeremy, Jason spends most of his out-of-school time watching TV since his parents don't want him going out or having friends in after school.

Three children. Three very different forms of care.

Friends to Play With

Katrina, Jeremy and Jason (see Figure 3) are three children attending Grade 2 in Ontario schools. All three participate in different types of care arrangements. Each arrangement interacts with the child's school program to create a very different social world in which the child plays and make friends.

The play community of most kindergarten and school-age children is fragmented into three or more circles of friends who are encountered while moving between school, child care and neighbourhood. Depending on decisions by the adults involved, these children may or may not have friends who follow the same "track" through the day.

The lack of continuity between these groupings may affect an individual child's happiness in either or both settings. The experiences of Katrina, Jeremy and Jason illustrate how closely their social connections are bound by decisions of educators with respect to classroom grouping and decisions by parents regarding care.

For this reason, schools and child care centres need to pay close attention to the social environment they create for children. By working together, they can foster the development of a school community that values children's friendships. A range of strategies can help to reduce the number of groups a child will be in while expanding continuity of membership across those groups. This provides more time for significant friendships to develop. For both kindergarten and school-age children, the strategies include:

Multi-age groupings in both classroom and child care programs. This substantially decreases the number of children and adults an individual child is in contact with over a two-year period while increasing the amount of time and shared experiences a group of children has together.

Concentrating children attending the kindergarten and out-of-school care program in as few classrooms as possible. Teachers often wish to separate children who have become too "tight" or whose behaviour together is disruptive in the classroom. If children have to be split up, it is important to ensure that each child has other friends with him or her. In the end, it may make more sense for parents, teachers and child care staff to work together to develop strategies for dealing with the disruptive behaviour.

For school-age children the strategies include:

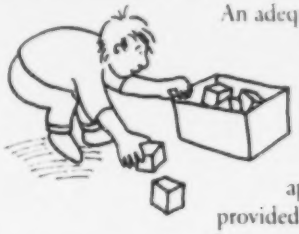
Encourage part-time enrollment in the child care centre . This enables children of parents who do not need full-time child care to play with friends. Administrative policies should accommodate flexible enrollment:

- before school (one to five days per week)
- after school (one to five days per week)
- on P.D. days
- during the summer (on a part-day or weekly basis).

Integrate services such as lunch, after-four and summer playground programs to make it easier to provide "multiple entry points" into a play setting. When a particular program provides a range of services, it is easier for children to be with friends regardless of their parents' work and care arrangements. Some may participate one day a week because they are interested in gymnastics. Others may be there because they need child care. Integration is best achieved when the child care program assumes responsibility for administering and co-ordinating programs in close co-operation with the school principal.

Larger child care programs, particularly for six- to 12 year-olds. This increases overlap among the various groups in which a child may be a member. Older children particularly benefit from larger group sizes — provided the program environment is organized to allow children to go off in smaller groupings of their own selection.

Material for Play



An adequate supply of play materials is essential in any child-centred play environment. Just as space must be able to accommodate a range of play types, it is important that appropriate materials are provided that encourage the same range of opportunities. Children of all ages benefit from access to a variety of materials, including those that

- can be explored, assembled and put to use in different ways
- can be used to build both table-top structures and forts
- can be used in dramatic and creative play
- allow catching, throwing and other co-ordination skills to be practised
- support play in small groups, with a friend or alone.

Programs that serve children from kindergarten age through 12 years need a wide range of materials. It is important that programs consider the particular needs of different ages.

Many school communities have found that a co-ordinated approach to materials and equipment benefits all children attending the school. For example, extended access to computers, library books, audiovisual equipment, sports equipment, etc. can help compensate for limited availability during classroom time. Joint purchases and joint fundraising also maximize limited resources.

Sharing equipment raises similar opportunities and pitfalls as sharing space. When replacement budgets are limited — or nonexistent — lost or broken equipment may not be replaced. Child care centres can avoid problems by building into their budgets the cost of joint purchases and repairs of shared materials.

Organizing Time: Avoiding the Hurry-up and Wait Syndrome

Compartmentalizing children's schedules into various school and out-of-school periods often blinds adults to the impact time organization has on children's experiences. Many children live a split-shift existence characterized by an alternating parade of activity, interruption and waiting for new activity to commence. At its worst, this routine discourages children from initiating, focusing and following through on more meaningful play projects.

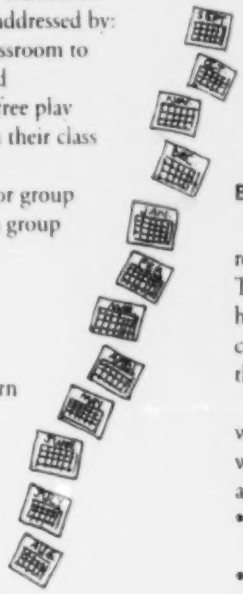
Following children through a typical day — and actually experiencing the rhythm of the day — clarifies how transitions within and between programs can be made smoother and more child centred (see Figure 6 on page 45).

In most school communities, only a small proportion of children in any given classroom attend the child care service. For this reason, much of the onus for easing transitions usually falls on child care staff. This can be addressed by:

- allowing older children to move from classroom to child care and back again unaccompanied
- starting the after-school program with a free play period, which children join as they finish their class work
- substituting a more flexible snack table for group snack time to eliminate the necessity of a group period
- keeping group meetings to an absolute minimum.

Following the school year

School and child care programs must learn to synchronize their efforts. For example, when children are starting the year and learning to manage new routines and expectations in their new classrooms, their child care program should be less structured. When preparation for Hallowe'en starts in the classroom, the child care program might try something different. On the other hand, when soccer season starts out of school, classroom skills instruction might appropriately follow.



Each school community needs to define for itself how and when to ensure continuity and diversity in the school/child care curriculum. Particular thought needs to be given to:

- seasonal celebrations and all school events
- themes
- specific curriculum activities.

Some curriculum initiatives in the classroom are well suited to follow up in the school-age child care program. For example:

- seedlings for a garden might be started in the classroom in April, transplanted outside by both classroom and child care in May and watered by the child care in July and August
- a visit by a professional storyteller to the classroom in January might result in a storytelling club at lunchtime in February
- a raceways unit developed in the child care during March Break might be brought into the classroom in April. Having figured out the mechanics of building the structure, children could focus on more academic learning activities when the program resumed in class.

As teachers and child care staff develop collaborative working relationships and come to appreciate each other's strengths, it becomes possible to divide programs and work in ways that make the most sense.

Caring for Play — The Role of Adults

Building a community of parents

Parents and their children need a wide range of supportive relationships in addition to those provided by a child care service. The support of friends, neighbours and relatives is critical to the health of families and communities. These informal supports for child rearing help families cope with unexpected crises as well as the day-to-day work of supervising and caring for children.

Communities have an opportunity to organize their services in ways that facilitate the development of a community of parents, which can over time offer a range of mutual supports individuals access as needed. To this end, schools and child care centres:

- organize joint social events such as potluck suppers, fun fairs, fundraising nights, etc.
- encourage all parents to attend school functions
- extend hours of the child care on school Parent Nights to ensure that child care parents are able to attend
- hold joint child care/classroom parent meetings to discuss issues of concern to all parents
- develop formal links between home and school committee and child care parent committee.

Figure 4

Career Pathing for Younger Part-time Staff

When Jenny was 15 years old she volunteered for a couple of months in the school-age child care program located in her old elementary school. At 16, she began to assist with gymnastics in the after-four program organized by her former Grade 3 teacher. With encouragement from her physical education teacher and the school-based child care supervisor, Jenny received her coach certification at age 17.

That summer she was hired to work in the day camp program offered by the child care centre. When she was 19, Jenny started working towards a B.A. in Early Childhood Education at her local university. While studying, Jenny earned part-time income by co-ordinating the after-school gymnastics program and occasionally working part-time in the school-age child care program. When she was 21, Jenny became the director of the Summer Day Camp program operated at the school. Upon graduation, at age 23, Jenny was hired as a full-time staff member at Howville Community Programs. Although she was working primarily with kindergarten children, there were now 12-year-olds in the school who had known Jenny for eight years.

After a year out of school, Jenny was accepted to the Faculty of Education, in part because of her substantial experience working with children. Her understanding of child development had been well grounded by watching a group of children grow up over a period of years. She developed strong skills in managing groups as well as exceptional ability to plan and implement curriculum. Jenny is now accustomed to working in a professional environment and will be a tremendous asset as a classroom teacher when she finally enters the system.

Such initiatives presume that the "community" that is of most interest to parents is not likely defined by the narrow criteria of child care usage. On the contrary, the task of educators and child care staff alike is to facilitate all parents in getting to know all their neighbours and certainly the parents of their child's classmates and school friends.

The Role of child care staff

Children develop an inclination to learn by being around people who enjoy learning and value learning in others. Wrap-around child care programs present unique opportunities to introduce into children's lives individuals who can be important positive influences. Unfortunately, as the number of adults in a child's life multiplies, the potential for establishing significant relationships diminishes.

Child care services should be introduced into a school community in ways that:

- encourage longer-lasting relationships between key adults and children
- ensure a high-calibre program that challenges children's learning
- promote communication among all of the adults involved in children's lives.

Staffing child care programs for children of kindergarten age

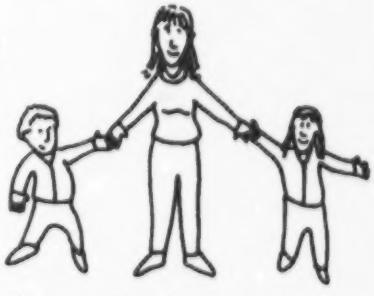
Decisions about staffing in the kindergarten child care centre must be made in conjunction with decisions about kindergarten groupings. Consequently, school decisions about which children will attend morning and afternoon classroom programs and whether or not the program will be delivered in multi-age groupings have many implications for how staffing is organized in the wrap-around child care.

When organizing their program models, schools are answering questions such as:

- how many full-time and part-time positions will be needed in the child care program
- the amount of preparation time provided to child care staff
- the ease with which classroom teachers and child care staff can meet.

Some communities have discovered that having all of the children enrolled in child care attend morning kindergarten increases staff preparation time and makes an afternoon nap more feasible (an important consideration when there are many three-year-olds participating). Other communities have found that employing a kindergarten assistant before school in the child care program increases continuity.

Decisions with respect to staff organization should be made in a co-ordinated and consensual way with everyone understanding the educational implications of the plan.



Staffing child care settings for school-age children

To staff school-age programs, it is necessary to find and keep staff with both appropriate skills and an aptitude for working in a still-emerging professional setting. Staff in these programs require a complex skill set equipping them to:

- work effectively with groups of children who have diverse interests and abilities
- communicate with parents and teachers about the needs of individual children
- give direction to the program's various part-time staff
- design and monitor a program with intricate and changing schedules and transitions.

To satisfy these requirements, child care managers must solve the problem of a five-hour program, spread out over 10 hours on regular school days, alternating with a 10-hour program on P.D. days and school breaks.

It is easier to attract and keep at least one trained staff around whom to build a staff team when 30 to 40 hours per week of employment can be offered. Different approaches to this problem are followed by different child care managers. These include:

- arranging programs so that school-age staff work part-time in the kindergarten or preschool program
- expanding size to increase efficiency: Larger programs both require and can afford full-time trained staff. (For example, an enrollment of 20 children should support one full-time staff and one assistant after school and on full days, while programs with fewer than 15 children will find this less possible)
- extending the hours and days of care: a more comprehensive child care service that provides lunch and after-school care and full-day care on P.D. days and summer holidays will find it easier to generate professional salaries
- consolidating a part-time position in the school with a part-time child care position to create a full-time or 3/4-time job: in some instances, child care centres have been able to hire classroom assistants, heritage language instructors, lunch supervisors, etc. to work part-time in the child care program.

Even programs able to hire full-time trained staff will likely find it necessary to hire some part-timers for one or more pr ram components, either at the beginning or the end of the day, on P.D. days or during school breaks. Typically, they do so by tapping into one or more labour market niches including:

- stay-at-home mothers who want to re-enter the labour force and work part-time
- high school, college and university students
- artists, musicians or other individuals looking to supplement their income.

Part-time staff can be an important source of continuity in the lives of children. The combination of predictable part-time hours together with the nature of the work itself can keep some part-timers involved for years.

Part-time staff and professional development

A primary task in providing for children's play is the development of a human resources plan covering supervision and training of part-time staff. Mapping out a career path for part-time staff makes it easier to conceptualize the support needed to make the work of these individuals more effective. Consider the example of Jenny in Figure 4 on page 42.

Many out-of-school programs have been successful in fostering community leadership potential among young people like Jenny by:

- making a point of hiring young people from the neighbourhood for part-time positions as they come available
- providing leadership training programs for youth and young adults, including coach training programs, or linking youth with such programs
- encouraging the use of programs as field placement sites for ECE, recreation and education students
- encouraging classroom assistants and lunchtime supervisors to take advantage of training opportunities at local colleges
- providing high quality in service training opportunities for staff.

When communities invest in individuals and place a premium on the development of skills, they build bridges for young people into the labour market and ensure that those young people are well equipped when they get there.

Encouraging Independence and Autonomy

Preparing elementary school-age children for the independence and autonomy of adolescence is an important task shared by parents, schools, child care centres and community recreation organizations. We achieve objectives in this area through the way in which adults interact with children, the ways in which programs are implemented and finally through the development of program policies that allow children to assume greater responsibility for their own movement within programs and during transitions between programs and between school and home.

Intermittent supervision

While children benefit from a gradual expansion of boundaries, attention must be paid to the abilities of the child and the potential risks present in the environment. Communities must work together to identify risks and to develop a shared approach to promoting children's independence and autonomy. This approach might include allowing children to assume increasingly greater responsibility for their own movement and safety both within the school building and within the neighbourhood through a procedure known as intermittent supervision.

There is no set age when children are mature enough to go home on their own at the end of the day or to play without immediate adult supervision. Adults are always taking a risk when they allow children such independence. On the other hand, children learn from risks and it is developmentally important for them to assume responsibility for their own actions.

While the whereabouts of each child should be known by his or her caregiver at all times, circumstances inevitably arise when individual children (or small groups) wish to participate in an activity apart from the rest of the group (and in some instances out of sight of the supervising adult).

Figure 5

Howville Community Programs

Intermittent Supervision — Parent Permission Form

Part One: Children Signing Out Alone

Howville Community Program staff will allow children to leave by themselves or with a friend at the end of the program day (or to participate in a program at the community centre) if:

- the child is able to recognize when he or she should be leaving, without reminders from staff
- the child is able to follow the expected sign-out procedure
- an appropriate permission form is signed indicating days and times when children may go home alone
- parent has discussed the following issues with child and is confident of his or her ability to manage going home alone:
  - the appropriate route home
  - what to do if no one is at home when he or she gets there
  - what to do if parent or sibling is later arriving home
  - what to do if a key is lost
  - what to do if bus fare is lost
  - what to do if harassed by another child or an adult
  - how to get help in event of an emergency
  - how to get advice by telephone if a problem is encountered.

For the first week of the arrangement, we expect a child will phone back to child care upon arrival at his or her destination. N.B. If staff become uncomfortable with the appropriateness of this arrangement for a particular child, it may be necessary to revert to an adult sign-out procedure.

I hereby grant permission to Howville Community Programs to allow my child to sign themselves out from the program on:

Day of week	Approximate time	Destination
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

I have read and agree to abide by the conditions outlined above.

_____ _____

Date Parent's Signature

Part Two: Intermittent Supervision Within the Program

I hereby grant Howville Community Programs permission to allow my child _____ to participate in activities that may take place for short periods of time (i.e., 10-15 minutes) out of sight of a staff person. In this community these might include:

- going from one part of the school to another alone (i.e., from classroom to child care/child care to washroom, child care to gym)
- playing in the playground but within sight and calling of the West door
- walking to the community centre to participate in a preregistered after-school program.

I understand that either community programs staff or myself may revoke this privilege at any time.

Parental Comments:

_____

_____

_____

_____ _____

Date Parent or Guardian

If parents approve, staff may at their discretion allow children without adult accompaniment in the following circumstances:

- when moving within the school building (i.e., from classroom to child care, between different after-school programs, between playroom and playground, to the washroom, etc.)
- when playing a game in the schoolyard
- when going to after-school piano lessons, swim lessons or other such off-site activity
- when running an errand to the corner store.

Intermittent supervision is a privilege dependent on the adult's confidence in a particular child's ability to follow through on expectations and otherwise demonstrating a capacity for responsibility. Before a child is permitted to enter an intermittent supervision arrangement, staff should discuss with them expectations for their behaviour. In addition, the child's parents must be informed of the arrangement and they should provide signed permission indicating their assent (see Figure 5).

As a final precaution, staff should discuss with the parent board of directors or advisory committee the types of situations in which an intermittent supervision arrangement is considered appropriate. This information should then be included in the centre's parent handbook.

Figure 6

The Whole Day — The Whole Child:
Observing Children's Play at School and Child Care

The following exercise focuses attention on children's total experience and provides useful background information for joint staff meetings. The more all of the adults involved in a child's day are aware of the total experience, the better equipped they will be to plan an appropriate program. This exercise could also be used to:

- orient new teachers, child care staff, student teachers from a faculty of education or community college E.C.E students
- develop strategies promoting an individual child's learning.

Select one child in the child care group who comes early and stays late. Your task is to follow the child through one complete day, paying attention to his or her reaction to the social and physical environment in which the child plays. The observation will be more manageable if you can avoid selecting a child who is easily distracted. If you serve a wide age range in one program group, it may be helpful to follow two children on consecutive days (perhaps the oldest and the youngest).

Stop to note your observations approximately every 20 to 30 minutes. Try to note significant changes in activity so that at the end of the day, it will be possible to identify how long children spent at certain types of tasks.

Your notes should be objective observations. There are opportunities for your reflections and interpretations at the end of the exercise. Be sure to note:

- activities engaged in by this child and any changes
- children with whom this child plays
- changes in program for the entire group
- adult instructions
- time spent waiting for instruction or for activity periods to begin.

Name of child: _____ Date: _____

Time	Activity Observation	# of participants	Child-initiated*	Adult-initiated**	Indoor	Outdoor	Routine***

* Child-initiated: When child freely selects to do an activity (i.e., riding a bike during outdoor play, painting during activity time, reading a book)

** Adult initiated: When a teacher introduces and monitors a particular activity (i.e., a baseball game during outdoor play, a group story, an art activity that everyone participates in)

*** Routine: Regular transitions or tasks such as moving from one space to another, eating, cleaning, washroom, etc.

Name of child: _____ Date: _____

Time	Activity	# of participants	Child-initiated*	Adult-initiated**	Indoor	Outdoor	Routine***

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** Adult initiated: When a teacher introduces and monitors a particular activity (i.e., a baseball game during outdoor play, a group story, an art activity that everyone participates in)

*** Routine: Regular transitions or tasks such as moving from one space to another, eating, cleaning, washroom, etc.

Reflections

a. Using the data you gathered when following the child through his/her day, calculate how much time (in minutes) the child spent in adult-directed versus child-directed activities.

b. How much time (in minutes) does the child spend alone, with one or two friends or in groups of three or more?

c. How much time (in minutes) did the child spend indoors and outdoors?

d. How much time did children spend waiting over the course of the day?

e. How does children's behaviour differ during play periods in school and child care?

f. Were there sufficient age-appropriate materials to support a range of play types during all play periods?

g. Are there children who seem to be left out of play in one or more settings?

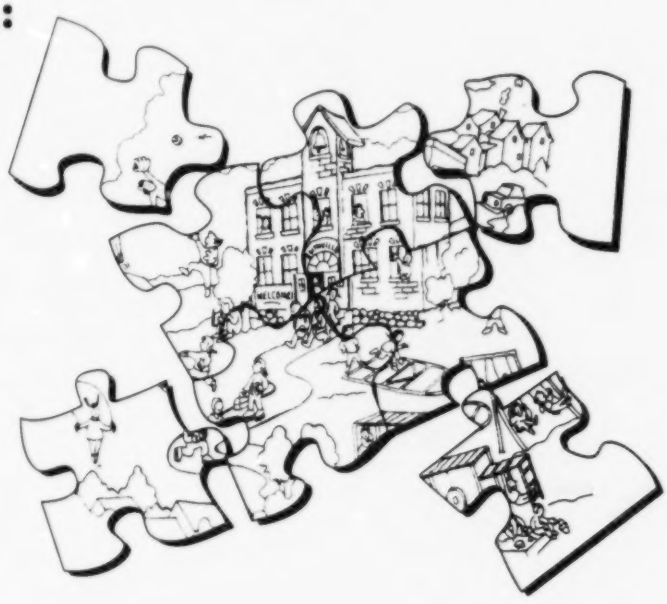
h. How many children were with you in each period (i.e., before school, classroom, lunch, after school)?

i. What do your observations tell you about the balance of activity?

j. Do any other patterns stand out?

k. What recommendations do you have for the program?

Managing the Connection: Neighbourhood Schools and Child Care Centres



If we look for differences, for ways to separate ourselves from each other, we will always be able to find them. What seems more productive is to try to find areas of commonality from which we can mutually grow and develop as educators, and thus improve the lives of young children.[1]

Patricia Dickinson, Ed. D.

Child care adds a new dimension to the organizational culture of neighbourhood schools. The approach communities choose when incorporating this dimension into other aspects of school-community life can significantly enhance — or diminish — the quality of the child care service.

Managing the school/child care connection calls for leadership from both school and child care administrators. This section describes one vision of partnership and presents options for local communities to consider when working out staffing arrangements, critical dates and budgets. The school/child care connection can become an everyday part of life in schools when co-ordination tasks are integrated into planning and communication structures already in place in most school communities.

Shared Goals — Planning Together

The presence of two distinct staff groups with different training, salary scales, working conditions and accountability structures may tend to marginalize those with fewer years of education, lower salaries and less optimum working conditions — in this case child care staff. At the same time, high levels of goal consensus in educational organizations have been demonstrated to contribute to the organization's effectiveness.[2] In addition:

- teachers are more confident about their work
- incidents of student disruption are less frequent
- individual teachers are less isolated (by producing a cultural norm of collaboration rather than a norm of independence within a school).

Many of the same benefits will accrue if the circle of consensus can be widened to include child care staff. Both schools and child care centres go through annual planning exercises. Such planning can be done collaboratively in whole or in part. Figure 1 following is an example of a shared goals and objectives statement. While goals are long-term aspirations, most of which remain constant from year to year, objectives are measurable outcomes that should be achievable within the year. Together they provide a shared direction and purpose.

In designing their goals, schools must be mindful of curriculum expectations established by the Ministry of Education and their local board. Once written, a joint goals and objectives statement should be given prominent position. It can be displayed on bulletin boards and in parent and staff handbooks.

Figure 1

Howville Elementary School — Howville Community Programs

Goals for Collaboration: 1993-94 School Year

Long-term Planning

Goal: Design a combined school/child care program for children that will promote their optimal health and well-being by:

- ensuring that both school and child care establish goals with measurable outcomes
- ensuring consultation between school, parents and child care staff about joint goals
- establishing a committee to develop specifications for long-term playground improvements.

Program

Goal: Ensure appropriate levels of continuity and diversity in children's experiences in school and child care by:

- providing high-quality play opportunities for children during their out-of-classroom time
- developing a co-ordinated approach to maximizing children's nutritional status and awareness.

Communication and Co-ordination

Goal: Improve communication between classroom teachers and child care staff by:

- orienting child care staff to early identification process
- scheduling visits by teachers and child care staff to each other's program
- developing a shared critical dates calendar
- implementing joint child care staff-teachers professional development
- encouraging sharing of observations, program plans
- organizing two school-community child care meetings during the year with non school-based centres.

Facility Management

Goal: Maintain an "inviting" and safe physical space by:

- clarifying responsibilities, schedules, etc. and review implementation quarterly
- encouraging children to assume responsibility for appropriate clean-up.

Paying for Play — The Child Care Budget

Child care centres, unlike schools, are businesses. The centre's board of directors is responsible for managing funds, paying staff and otherwise acting as "trustees" for the membership of the organization. Financial stability will have a profound impact on staff morale, the quality of the program — and ultimately the attractiveness of the program to the parent consumer.

When principals understand the financial side of child care, they better appreciate the day-to-day implications of decisions. For this reason alone, child care centres should provide a detailed site-specific financial report, which can be presented at least annually to a public meeting. Involving the principal in developing the centre's budget can also be helpful.

The basic principle of a child care budget is the same as that of any other business: expenses must not exceed revenue.

Revenue is derived from two sources:

- parent fees
- operating grants from provincial government.

While many child care centres implement various fundraising schemes, these rarely contribute significantly to the program's operating costs. Similarly, some centres receive grants from foundations or other government programs to implement specific projects. These can be useful; however, they usually represent only a small part of the total operating budget.

Most revenue is tied to enrollment. As enrollment increases so does revenue. When programs operate to their capacity, they are generally more cost effective. In addition to parents' need for care, four factors determine enrollment levels:

- amount of space available
- parents' awareness of the program and attitudes towards it
- children's attitudes towards the program
- the number of months of program operation.

Costs are driven by a number of variables, including:

- hours of staffing required
- number of hours of preparation allowed
- staff training and experience levels
- materials
- food
- days of service
- program policies
- rent
- the program configuration (i.e., groupings, adult/child ratios, etc.) required by the **Day Nurseries Act**
- vacancy rate.

Principals can support a financially viable child care program by:

- ensuring the availability of consistent and appropriate space year-round
- considering overlapping staffing strategies such as hiring child care staff as lunch supervisors and classroom assistants
- informing parents about the program's merits
- contributing to good working conditions for child care staff through ongoing communication of important information.

When child care programs operate on a cost-effective basis, they are able to pay more attractive salaries to staff, thereby attracting more experienced and skilled individuals. They will also have more resources to contribute to joint ventures with the school and be able to maintain a more affordable fee structure.

In addition to following sound financial practices (see Figure 2), child care managers support the development of a financially viable program by:

- maintaining a high profile within the school community by taking part in community events
- hiring skilled staff who are able to work successfully with a group of children and be effective ambassadors to other children, parents and school staff
- broadening the revenue base by providing more comprehensive service, including year-round program and part-time care. Because school-age child care programs must compete with summer day camps and after-school activities, programs can maintain and expand enrollment by offering these services as well.

Figure 2

Sound Financial Management Practices

Like the managers of other businesses, child care managers and boards of directors of non-profit corporations must see that appropriate financial management practices are followed. Specifically they should ensure that:

- ✔ the budget process accurately anticipates staffing needs in various program components (i.e., before school, lunchtime, after school, P.D. days, school breaks)
- ✔ vacancies are filled expeditiously
- ✔ parent fees are collected promptly
- ✔ government reports are filed as required for recouping grants, subsidies, etc.
- ✔ accounts are monitored carefully
- ✔ regular financial statements are prepared, indicating the financial position of the program (monthly or quarterly depending on circumstances)
- ✔ part-time staffing levels are monitored and adjustments are made to take into account fluctuating enrollment.

Program affordability and flexible enrollment policies

The cost of child care services puts pressure on parents, particularly those with more than one child and those with younger children. As children get older, other alternatives may become possible. Two-parent families may be able to "off shift" on certain days of the week (by adjusting work hours to allow one parent to provide child care). Care by a family member may become possible as children get older and the hours when care is required become fewer. For some older children, self-care and sibling care may become viable.

Child care centres support families by conceptualizing a program that can be accessed in a flexible way according to the particular needs of both children and parents. This allows parents to reduce their fees by taking advantage of other resources that may be available to them. In Figure 3 following, the Program Registration Form of a centre that allows flexible enrollment is provided.

In this example, the program boosts enrollment in its lunchtime service (which has to compete with the free supervision provided by the school) by requiring after-school participants to pay for both periods on the days they attend.

The program responds to occasional days of low enrollment by operating high-quality after-school clubs one or two days per week. In a middle-income community, parents will pay for a quality program. In a less well off community, funding from the municipal recreation department or service clubs may be available. For families who are eligible, some municipalities will approve subsidies for part-time care.

Flexible enrollment makes sense for both children and parents. It does, however, add to the administrative workload of the child care administrator. A child attending on a part-time basis requires as much administration time as a child attending full-time.

Figure 3

Howville Community Programs
Program Registration Form: 1994-95
6-12-year-olds

Dear Parent:

The following form is designed to help you piece together your child's care arrangements for the duration of the 1994-95 school year. Please note: it is your responsibility to inform Howville Community Programs of any change in arrangements at least one month in advance. A separate form is required for each child.

Please register my child _____ for the following programs.

1. Lunch Hour Supervision (one-time $10 registration fee)
   ☐ Monday ☐ Tuesday ☐ Wednesday ☐ Thursday ☐ Friday

2. Hot Meal Plan ($10 per month for each day used) Indicate days:
   ☐ Monday ☐ Tuesday ☐ Wednesday ☐ Thursday ☐ Friday

3. Before School Supervised Play ($15 per month for each day used) Indicate days:
   ☐ Monday ☐ Tuesday ☐ Wednesday ☐ Thursday ☐ Friday

4. After School Play Supervision ($48 per month for each day used) Indicate days:
   ☐ Monday ☐ Tuesday ☐ Wednesday ☐ Thursday ☐ Friday

5. After School Clubs for children in Gr. 3-6 (children in Gr 3-4 limited to 1 club/week)
   ($30 for 7 week session - N.B. Program is subsidized by the Howville Recreation Dept.) ___ Indicate days:
   ☐ Monday ☐ Tuesday ☐ Wednesday ☐ Thursday ☐ Friday

6. Full-Day Programs ($24/day)
   Where space is available, parents may register for individual full-day programs a week in advance of the day.

7. Thursday-Friday Care Link (6 p.m.-9 p.m.) ____ ($5/night)

8. Summer Program (N.B. Space cannot be guaranteed for anyone registering after June 1.)

	AM only $45/week	Extended Care $135/week		AM only $45/week	Extended Care $135/week
Week One	___	___	Week Five	___	___
Week Two	___	___	Week Six	___	___
Week Three	___	___	Week Seven	___	___
Week Four	___	___	Week Eight	___	___

See Figure 1 on page 36 for program descriptions

Building a team

It is not always easy for classroom teachers and child care staff to be knowledgeable about each other's program — even when the child care program is school-based. Recent Quebec research[1] found that 85 per cent of teachers and child care staff rarely, if ever, talked with each other about details of their respective programs such as:

- what the children are permitted to do
- how they motivate the children
- how they communicate with parents
- how they solve children's conflicts
- their approach with difficult children
- their educational goals

When the school/child care connection is first being established, principals and child care managers are the primary link between the two staff teams. Together they play a pivotal role in representing child care interests to school staff, home and school associations, etc. and in keeping child care staff informed about school activities and decisions.

With the passage of time, many principals and child care managers seek to broaden lines of communication. While both school and child care have separate decision-making structures, inviting a child care representative to key school staff meetings is an essential first step to co-ordination. In some cases it is useful to have a child care representative on particular committees (i.e., to plan school events, to supervise the use of the gym storage cupboard, etc.).

Similarly, the involvement of a school representative on the child care board or advisory committee meetings also encourages information sharing. Vehicles are also needed for school staff to have input into child care decisions, including policy issues, hiring, etc.

In many communities, principals and child care managers have created opportunities for individual teachers and child care staff to meet and discuss program issues or concerns regarding individual children. The child care supply staff budget should be able to accommodate some after-school or noon-hour meetings for this purpose.

Critical dates

The decision-making timetable in most schools and child care centres is predictable. Following is a sample school/child care critical dates calendar. Joint planning of the year ahead can help to identify possible joint ventures and shared projects.

Figure 4

Howville Elementary School-Howville Community Programs
Critical Dates

September	School Organization Meeting - child care supervisor in attendance - organize planning and procedures for year - staff list distributed includes names of all school and child care staff - child care staff included in coffee fund, lottery pools, committees - critical dates co-ordinated - child care staff given time to meet individually with teachers (possibly over lunch) - Hallowe'en programs are planned.
October	P.D. Day - kindergarten/primary teacher joined by child care specialists School Open House - child care room(s) open — coffee and refreshment area - general child care parent meeting over supper (child care provided for parents) - child care staff visit classroom programs and teachers visit child care.
November	Child Care staff representative participates in in-service training with teaching staff - Topic: Music Across the Curriculum Chief Caretaker attends child care staff meeting to discuss any caretaking concerns and plan for December "full school cleaning."
December	Parent-Teacher night - child care staff available to participate in meeting or to be met with separately - child care available for parents in one child care room (sign up in advance) Joint staff end of term party.
January	Community skating party — all teachers and child care staff in attendance School pictures — include child care staff.
February	Plan kindergarten registration - make arrangements for children enrolled in preschool program to visit classroom in small groups with child care staff - supervisor and principal review information materials for parents Classroom teachers visit child care program Chief caretaker attends child care staff meeting to discuss any caretaking concerns and plan for March "full school cleaning."
March	March Break.
April	Kindergarten registration — consultation between school and child care about groupings of children Child care representative involved in school hiring committee Teacher representative involved in hiring new child care staff.
May	Lunchtime baseball house league organized by school-child care committee Principal solicits feedback from teaching staff as part of the child care program review process (10 minutes at one staff meeting).
June	Primary consultant does whole language workshop with child care staff from several centres Child care staff participate in Field Day organization and implementation Joint staff end of year party.
July	
August	Principal and child care supervisor confirm plans for the year, dates, goals, etc.

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Parent Communication

Staff in both settings give and receive information to and from parents. A co-ordinated approach can simplify the process for everyone involved. Such an approach could include:

- a shared school/child care brochure
- co-ordinated parent handbooks for new parents
- planning and promoting a joint kindergarten registration day
- a child care role at school open houses
- a child care column in the school newsletter
- formal links between the child care board of directors or advisory committee and the home and school association.

Confidentiality

Most parents welcome communication among other adults involved in their child's life. Principals and child care managers must ensure that policies are in place to safeguard rights to confidentiality while encouraging information sharing.

Under the **Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1989**, personal information cannot be disclosed to any person other than the individual to whom the information relates (or the parent if the individual is under age the age of 16) unless prior consent is obtained for that disclosure. While only schools and municipally operated child care centres come under the Act at this time, all child care operations should respect the spirit of the law and voluntarily follow its requirements.

Either one reciprocal form between the child care centre and the school or two separate consent forms may be used (see Figure 4). They should include:

- name of school, child care and student
- rationale for the exchange of information
- what information is to be shared
- how long the information will be stored
- the length of time the consent is valid for
- the date the form is signed
- who will use the information
- who will have access to the information
- where the information will be kept
- the signature of parent(s)/guardian(s)
- a permission statement

Figure 5

Howville Public School/
Howville Community Programs
Permission to Share Information

Ongoing communication between all the adults involved in your child's day enhances his/her educational and care experience. If you wish such communication to take place, please indicate below.

I/we hereby give consent for the staff of Howville Community Programs and Howville Elementary School to communicate information to each other that relates to the physical, emotional and social development of _____ (name of child).

I understand that any written communication will be kept in my child's file in the school and child care offices and may be viewed by myself and staff of Howville Community Programs or Howville Elementary School. I further understand that this waiver applies only for the 1994-95 school year and such written communication will be kept for a period of two years.

Parent Comments:

Signature of Parent or Guardian: _____

Date: _____

Behaviour Management

Working together to solve behaviour problems and establish consistent expectations can make it easier for children to understand and follow through on those expectations.

That is not to say that expectations have to be the same in both settings. Children will accommodate some diversity in requirements. Moreover, behaviour that may be tolerable when there are 30 children in the playground may be unacceptable when there are 200.

Frequently, child care staff find themselves supervising children in the playground at lunchtime or after school who are not enrolled in the child care program. A clear behaviour management policy — supported by all the adults in the building — will go a long way towards clarifying the situation for both children and adults. In some communities, school principals have gone one step farther and designated a child care staff person to be responsible for lunch-hour supervision. When the school hires untrained community residents to assist with the lunch hour, providing the trained child care staff with clear authority can dramatically improve the overall calibre of supervision.

Child care centres are required by the **Day Nurseries Act** to develop a behaviour management policy that can be shared with parents. This policy provides staff with general guidelines on how to deal with behaviour — usually by identifying appropriate and inappropriate consequences. Ideally there should be consultation between child care and school staff in developing that policy.

Child Abuse

Both educators and child care staff are responsible under The **Child and Family Services Act** to report cases of suspected child abuse:

A person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child is or may be in need of protection shall forthwith report the belief and the information upon which it is based to a society.[4]

There will be occasions when child care and school staff hold different views as to the necessity of reporting. Operators and school principals should review together their reporting policies and procedures. Shared staff development in this area may also be useful.

Sharing of information does not reduce an individual's obligation to report. However, it may provide a more detailed picture of the child, which will speed up or slow down the urgency to report. Careful attention must be given to ensure that parental permission for communication has been agreed to.

Children with Special Needs

Children with special needs benefit from a high degree of continuity and co-ordination between home, school and child care. In fact, lack of continuity may contribute to inappropriate behaviour on the part of some children. School and child care centres can work together to respond to a special needs child by:

- establishing procedures for co-ordinating how needs are addressed (including emergency medical procedures, behavioural management techniques, procedures for ensuring the accountability of dispensing medication, etc.)
- holding periodic conferences (at least once in the first three months for a new child and annually thereafter); these are opportunities for staff and parents to exchange observations about the child's participation in both programs
- ensuring regular informal communication between parents, child care staff and the classroom teacher about developmental goals, behavioural issues, health concerns, etc.
- establishing procedures to facilitate the transition from preschool to kindergarten (i.e., kindergarten teacher and child care staff visiting a child's preschool centre or a co-ordinated visit to the classroom and child care in the spring of the year prior to kindergarten attendance)
- co-ordinating a plan for sharing appropriate information with other parents and staff about an individual child's needs and abilities.

When programs serve children with special needs, it is helpful if either the principal or the child care supervisor is qualified — either through training or experience — to facilitate their full participation.

Programs serving children with special needs frequently require extra staffing. Different communities provide such staffing in different ways. The local office of the Ministry of Community and Social Services can provide information and advice. Wherever possible, efforts should be made to hire one individual to work with the child in both school and child care.

Putting It All Together — The Local School Child Care Agreement

It is a shared responsibility of school and child care administrators to negotiate terms at the local level that support high-quality programs. While the school board will have some form of written contract, it is helpful to develop a written agreement at the local school level. This agreement can be a useful tool for promoting continuity in the event a new principal or child care supervisor is retained. It also provides a focus for annual evaluation. Agreements can include:

- a brief summary of program philosophy, shared goals and objectives for the coming year
- statement of available rooms clearly indicating times, dates, etc.
- statement on any other issues that need attention (i.e., kindergarten registration process, any anticipated changes in space, critical dates, etc.)
- rules for shared space.

1. Pat Dickinson (1991). A Current View of Child Care: Caregivers or Educators? **Canadian Children** (16) 1.
2. Rosenholtz (1989). Workplace Conditions. **The Elementary School Journal.** March.
3. M. Baillargeon, R. Bestalel-Presser, M. Joncas and H. Larouche (1993). One Child, Many Environments: School-based Day Care Programs? **The Alberta Journal of Educational Research** (39) 1.
4. **Child and Family Services Act.** S68 (2).

CONCLUSION

When Communities Care

The vision and the supporting policy framework that we are looking for, has the potential to take school age child care to another plateau: beyond a single service, underpinned by a set of minimum standards, to a component of a comprehensive service for children guided by a vision of excellence and social and cultural relevance from its inception[1]

- Nancy Brown and Connie Linderoth

Caring for children's play has been a tradition in Ontario communities since before the turn of the century. Today, caring for play has become a more intricate institutional challenge. It has also become more urgent. Helping parents balance their work and family responsibilities supports both the economic health of communities and the well-being of families. When communities recognize that learning depends on children's physical, nutritional and emotional health, they must care about the quality of children's experiences between home and school.

The changing circumstances of Ontario families and communities is not an isolated phenomenon. Those changes are occurring throughout Canada and the industrialized world. In the United States nearly 85 per cent of the major urban elementary school systems provide school-age care.[2] In Europe, Australia, New Zealand and elsewhere, communities and school systems are also struggling to accommodate these changes and better understand their implications for the education and well being of children. As we better understand the ecology of children's development, it has become clear that communities in general, and schools in particular, cannot ignore the implications of these changes.

Over the past 10 years, Ontario has prepared itself well to adapt to these changing circumstances. Government policies have moved from prohibiting to allowing to mandating the development of child care services in neighbourhood schools. Pilot projects have been funded to explore the implications and possibilities of various partnerships and service delivery models. Numerous public policy reports and consultations have focused the attention of communities and institutions on the road ahead. Talk has been followed up with significant funding for program expansion.

On the surface, the school/child care connection seems like a complex puzzle. But as the pieces are defined, it becomes clear that the connection is simple common sense. With good will and systematic attention from policymakers, school boards, school principals, educators and child care professionals, common sense can be implemented.

Caring For Play offers a range of practical strategies that can be put into use immediately. However, **Caring for Play** is not the last word on school/child care partnership. As relationships and programs evolve, new perspectives will emerge, as well as new issues demanding attention.

The discussion will continue in many forums, one of which is **Exploring Environments: A Newsletter About School-age Child Care**. A publication of the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care, **Exploring Environments** has a mandate to promote high-quality school-age child care in Ontario. Your participation in that ongoing discussion is invited.

1. Nancy Brown and Connie Linderoth (1994). Presentation to Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care Conference "Who Cares" - January, 1994.
2. Peckow (1993). SAC in most city school systems. **School Age Notes** February.

For Additional Resources . . .

Who: Child Care Network
Where: 500 Bloor St. W. - 2nd Floor,
Toronto, Ontario M5S 1Y8. (416) 538-0628.
The emerging industry association for child care centres and local child care networks in Ontario. Supports member centres through monthly bulletins, publications, workshops, conferences and group insurance programs.

Who: Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care
Where: 500 Bloor St. W. - 2nd Floor,
Toronto, Ontario M5S 1Y8. (416) 538-0628.
What: The principal advocacy group for the child care sector in Ontario. Membership includes member centres of the Child Care Network, labour groups (including teachers' federations), provincial child care associations and other organizations. Quarterly publication, **Child Care Challenge**, is an excellent resource for monitoring child care policy issues across the province.

Who: Ontario School-Age Child Care Committee
Where: 500 Bloor St. W. - 2nd Floor, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1Y8. (416) 538-0628.
What: Promotes quality school-age child care in Ontario through conferences and publications. Publishes **Exploring Environments: A Newsletter About School-age Child Care.**

Who: Canadian Child Care Federation
Where: 401 - 120 Holland Ave., Ottawa, Ontario K1Y OX6.
(613) 729-5289.
What: A Canada-wide forum of information exchange and support services for organizations and individuals involved with Canadian child care.

Who: Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association
Where: 323 Chapel St., Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7Z2.
(613) 594-9375.
What: Canada-wide child care advocacy group. Lobbies for improved policy and funding from the federal government.

Who: Child Care Resource and Research Unit
Where: Centre for Urban Studies,
University of Toronto, 455 Spadina Ave.,
Toronto, Ontario M5S 2G8. (416) 978-6895.
What: Provides information, policy research and educational functions for community groups, school boards, government, corporations, unions and agencies concerned about work and family issues and child care.

Who: Home Child Care Association of Ontario
Where: 3101 Bathurst St., Suite 303,
Toronto, Ontario M6A 2A6. (416) 783-1152.
858 Bank St., Suite 103,
Ottawa, Ontario K1S 3W3. 1-800-465-3330.
What: Umbrella association for licensed home child care agencies in Ontario.

Who: Ontario Association for Child Care in Education
Where: c/o Valerie Sterling, North York Board of Education,
5050 Yonge St., North York, Ontario M2N 5N8.
(416) 395-8119.
What: Informal group of school board staff with child care responsibilities. Meets approximately three times per year for resource and information sharing.

Who: Ontario Coalition for Student Nutrition
Where: c/o Food Share Metro Toronto,
328 Queen St. W., Lower Level,
Toronto, Ontario M5V1Z7. (416) 392-1629.
What: Coalition of organizations with an interest in the establishment and operation of food supplement programs for Ontario school children. Advocacy, conference organization and resource development.

Who: Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services
Where: See your local Blue Pages.
What: Information about child care within your municipality will be available through the local area office of the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

Who: Ontario Ministry of Education and Training
Where: 16th and 17th Floor, Mowat Block,
900 Bay St., Toronto, Ontario M7A 1L2.
(416) 325-2091.
What: Policy development related to the interface between child care and education.

Who: School-age Child Care Project
Where: School-age Child Care Project, Wellesley College for Research on Women, Wellesley, MA 02181.
(617) 235-0320 ext. 2554.
What: Research, resource development and training centre for anyone with an interest in school-age child care.

Who: School-age NOTES
Where: P.O. Box 40205, Nashville, TN 37204.
(615) 242-8464.
What: A U.S. resource organization on school age care. Publishes monthly newsletter and distributes print resources of interest to school-age care agencies and advocates.

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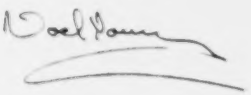

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